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BY-GONES

A BOOK OF VERSE

BY

M. ST. C. WRIGHT.

Ms. A. 193.7.15

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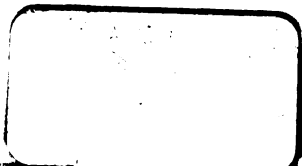


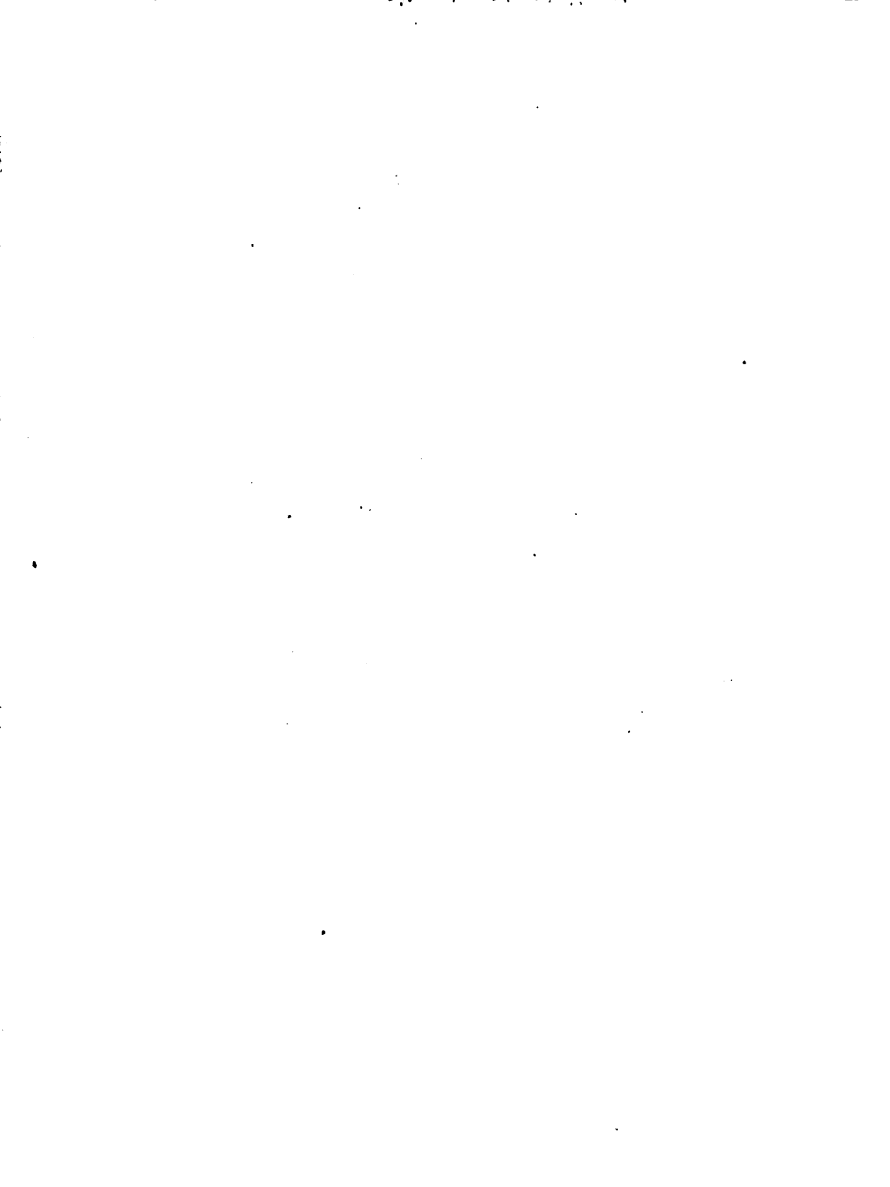
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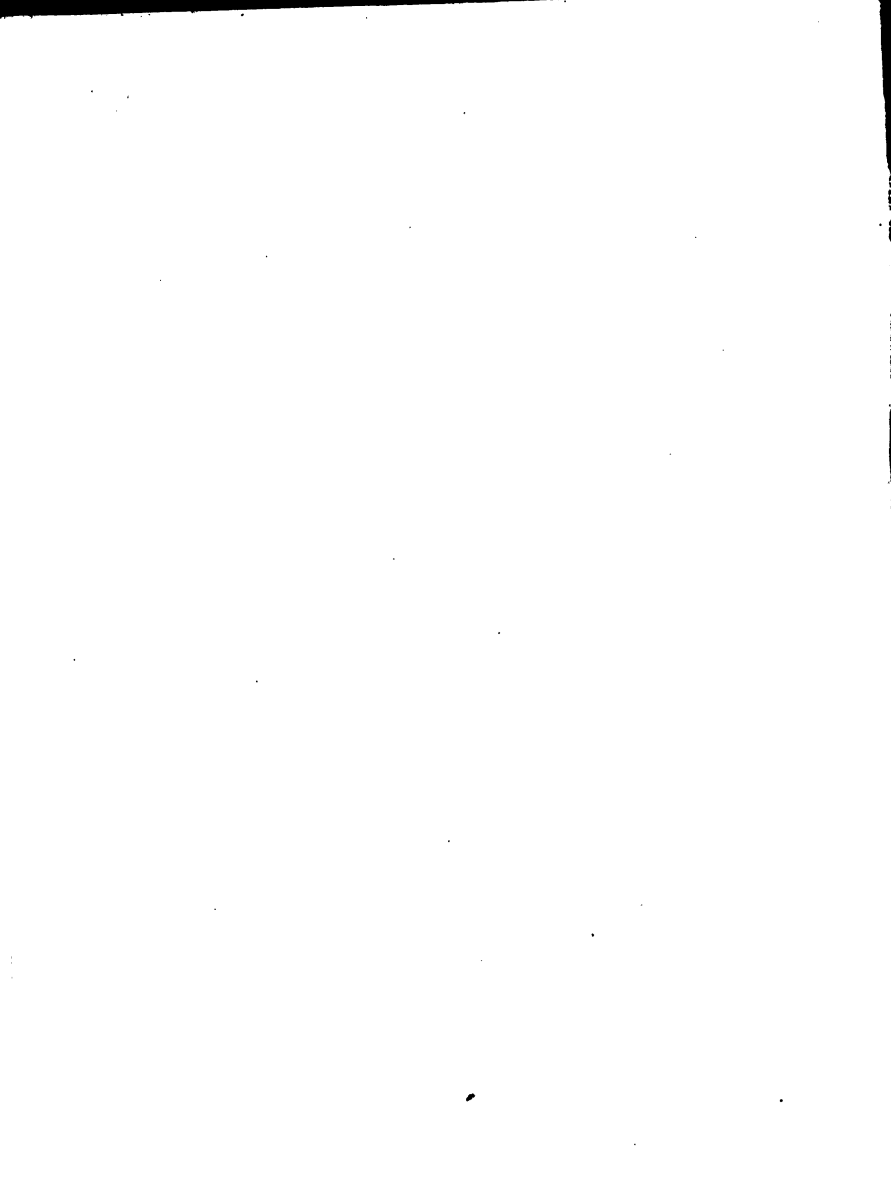
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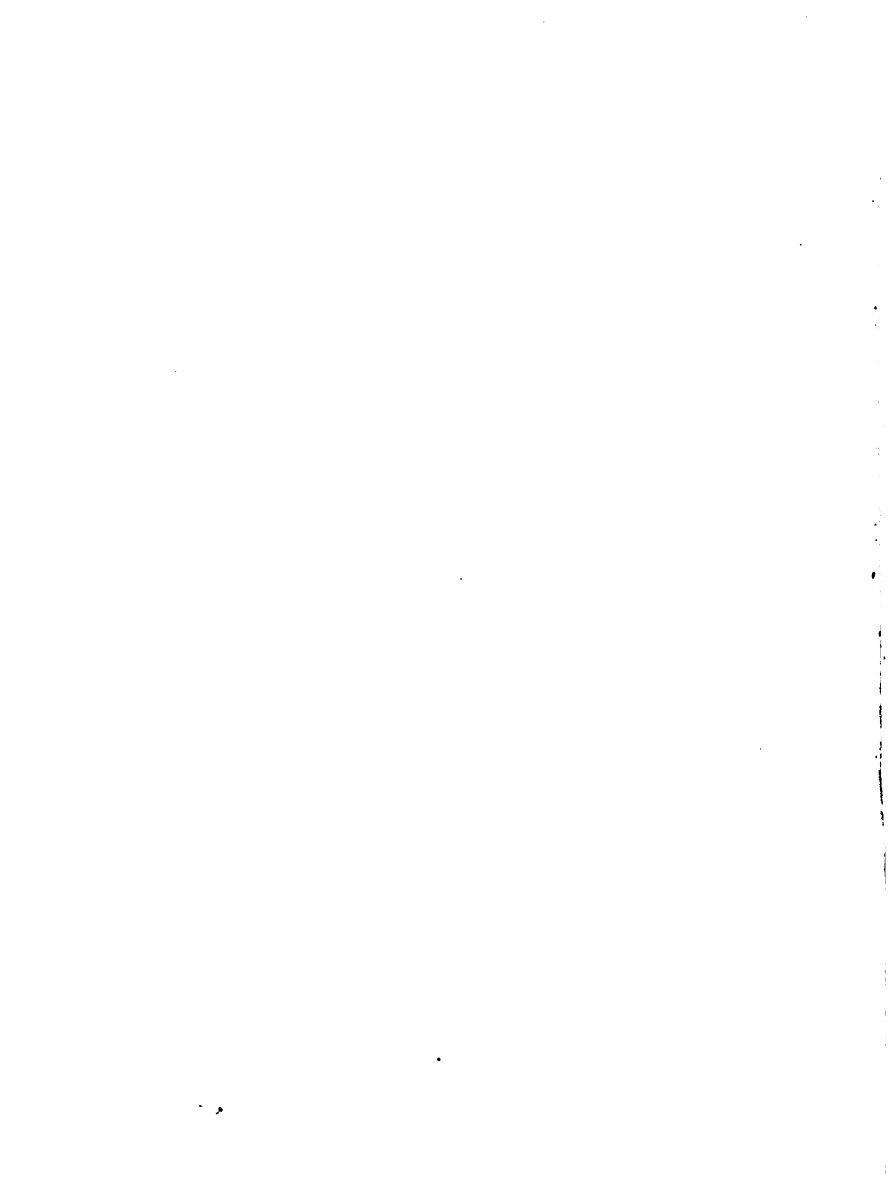
The Author.

7 March, 1891.









BY-GONES

A BOOK OF VERSE

—BY—

Merle St. Croix
M. ST. C. WRIGHT.



"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in baskets of silver."—PROVERBS 25, 11.



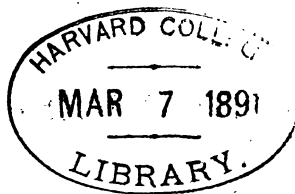
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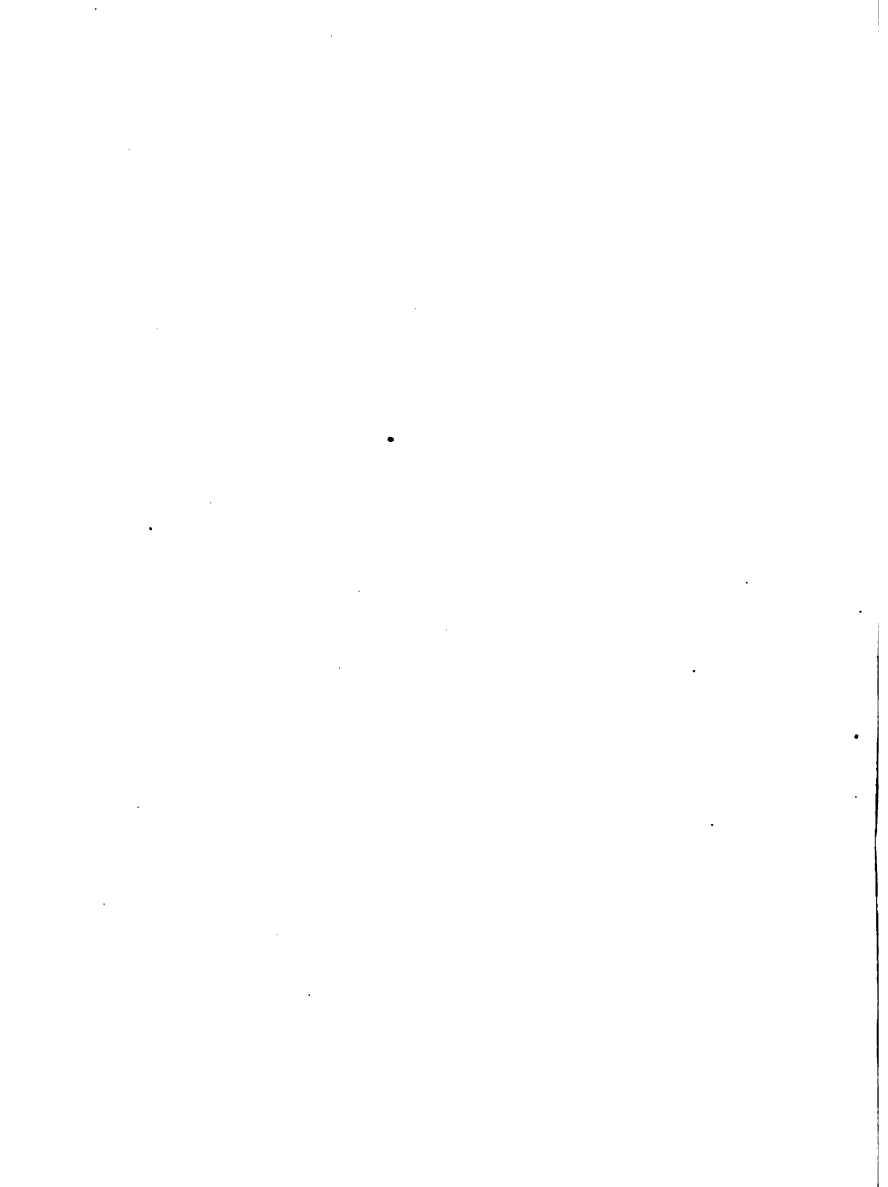
A



The Anchor.

PRESS OF
LIVINGSTON MIDDLEDITCH & Co.
26 CORTLANDT ST., N. Y.

TO MY FIRST AUDIENCE,
MY FATHER AND MOTHER,
THEN
TO THAT LARGER, NOT LESS KINDLY, AUDIENCE
WHICH, WITH THE FAMILY, CONSTITUTES
MY CHURCH,
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.



INTROIT.

Shall I sow my song by the wayside,
A prey to the birds of air?
If even a dove should peck my pride,
Think you I would not care?

Shall I sow my song in a barren heart,
To wither and fade forlorn?
If I thought such fate would be its part,
I would rather it were not born.

Shall I sow my song in a fertile nook,
To open and root and grow?
Shall I garner in one grateful look?
God speed it, let it go.

1879.

To friend.

With the respects of



PREFACE.

I always read prefaces now that I am "become a man," as I read sign-posts on a new road. But, like all directions, they should serve a purpose, be brief and to the point, not negative themselves by indirectness. The title of this book, the "devil" insisted, was "By Jones." But a better spirit prevailed. "BYGONES" it is; and bygones which I cannot let be bygones on this occasion, for these verses are my sole memorials of happy days and sad, the bridge to many a past experience which I would have live on in me, if not in others.

There is also a practical as well as sentimental purpose to this praeludium. I call attention to the fact that these poems are mostly the vintage of two years—1882 and 1883, when I decanted my spirit most freely, being driven in upon myself, by solitary teaching, to what may thus appear a fairly fundamental tendency of my nature toward (must I say it?) poetasting. I desire further to explain a sonnet form of my invention, of which I once was proud. The octette of the sonnet is thrown into the centre in the new arrangement, the sestette divided into two triads of one rhyme each, of which one precedes the octette to introduce the subject, the other follows to sum up, or point a moral. I must apologize also for certain topics—I think not for the treatment of them—which to-day I might not choose to introduce. They are "studies" from life, as free as might be from objectionable features, consistently with the keeping of reality. My effort has ever been to be true and pure, strike either life's objective fact, as in descriptive narration, or hit the truth of its interior experience.

The songs have come spontaneously, often composed during walks, and have been written quickly, "on occasion," as Goethe recommends. To fix the fresh impression, secure the first touch, has been my aim. Dialect has thrust itself upon me through reading in those lines; and I have been possessed to "speak with tongues,"—I trust intelligibly, needing no interpreter. Many

translations made in those days have unfortunately, for me, not been preserved. I subjoin a few extant specimens. Their characteristic was the exact reproduction of the original schemes of rhyme and metre, and the translation of the thought line for line, within the bounds of the artistically possible. Not all I have written appears here; it will never appear: the w. p. b., as a friend facetiously calls it, is its repository.

This book is hastily put together for a special end—a Fair, in order to obtain “this world’s sole solid,” cash, for my church-building. The modicum of reward to my people, and of reputation to me, will, I judge, be about the same. Sometimes swift labors are not less effective than the “slow births of time”; what takes long to create, in preparation, may be brought quickly forth in execution. It may be I have snatched these songs from death only to second death; I trust, from inactivity to influence and life. Though they be “BYGONES,” I hope their day is not gone by for others, nor the day gone by in which, perhaps, with opportunity, I may again turn to this recreation, which has—as leisure should—its serious side.

THE AUTHOR.

Written at the Printers,
under Press-ure.
NOVEMBER 17TH, 1890.

I regret greatly that time has been denied me to print the music to which the Slumber-Songs were cradled into being. Each has its original melody, as has the Plantation Song, and other work—suppressed because the thought there lagged behind the tune.

ERRATA :

Page 12, date : 1883.

Page 15, 3rd line from foot, delete hyphens.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Norembega,	1
In the Woods,	5
Spring,	8
In the Bay,	10
The Cry of the Suicide,	13
Out of the Deep,	14
A Fallen Star,	15
The North Wind,	16
Still Hours,	17
Clear After Storm,	18
Dave,	19
"Uncle Morris,"	22
Plantation Song,	24
A Rencontre,	25
Ye Mistletoe,	26
At Our Feet,	28
The Teaching of Grief,	28
Winter,	29
Hope,	30
Dawn,	30
Light and Shade,	30
Spring of the Spirit,	31
Two Lovers,	31
Opportunity,	32
Longing,	32
E Plumine,	34
Influence,	35
"Let the Whole Creation Cry,	36
Undertones,	37
The Tormentor,	39
Regret,	39
Resignation,	40

	PAGE
The Voice of Age,	40
Listening and Looking,	41
Belief,	42
Some People,	44
Fame,	44
Quatrain,	45
Peace,	45
Ygdrasil,	45
Sextain,	46
Gifts,	46
Eloquence,	46
Caresses,	46
Bubbles,	47
Baby,	48
Sleep-Song,	49
Cradle-Song,	50
Slumber-Song,	51
The Call of Genius,	51
Summer-Cloud,	51
"Where it Listeth,"	52
The Winged Seed,	53
Crippled,	54
Melancholy,	54
Forgetfulness,	55
In Sorrow,	55
Rare Moments,	56
Departure,	57
Storm,	58
Meditation,	58
Summer,	59
By the Sea,	61
Gull Island,	63
Autumn,	64
Love,	65
Dead,	66
Rose Leaves,	67
A Misty Morning,	67
Expectancy,	67
"Songs Without Words,"	68
Night,	68
The Husbandman,	68

CONTENTS.

XI

	PAGE
Fate,	69
"The Substance of Things not Seen,"	69
Wishes,	70
A Symbol,	70
In the Dark,	70
Though Far, Yet Nearer,	71
Hymns,	71
Easter Hymn,	73
Class-Song,	74
Simylations,	75
Affinity,	76
A Defence,	76
St. Valentine,	77
A Bit of Autobiographical Advice,	77
Rondel,	78
Triolets,	79
"Confessional,"	79
Connors,	81
Ma Lass,	83
Love's Dialogue,	84
Forcing His Hand,	85
The Maiden's Nay,	85
Question,	86
Answer,	87
"Fause, Fause,"	88
"The Warl' Ha a Rhyme,"	89
Song,	90
A Toi,	91
L' Espérance,	92
Table D' Hôte	92
L' Inconnue,	93
L' Amour,	93
Chanson À Boire,	95
Liebe und Leben,	95
Translations,	96-98
Sonnets,	101-129
A Prophecy,	101
Hermeneutical,	101
Young Manhood,	102
Entrance on Life,	103
Life's Day,	103

	PAGE
Light in the Darkness,	104
Evening,	104
Body and Soul,	105
Doubt and Faith,	105
Reason and Faith,	106
Life and Death,	106
Death in Life,	107
Love,	107
Via Recta,	108
"Eheu ! Fugaces,"	108
"Ye are the Light of the World,"	109
The Harvest Call	109
The House of God,	110
A Hermitage,	110
Service,	111
Worship,	111
Old Friends,	112
Forgetfulness,	112
The Fellowship of Sorrow,	113
The Gift of Grief,	113
Consolation,	114
New Years,	114
Death,	115-117
Friendship,	118-119
To a Friend of College Days,	120
To G. A. B.,	120
To E. L. M.,	121-2
To V. C. W.,	122-3
To M. F. W.,	124
To E. L. M.,	124
"Waes Hael,"	125
The Old New Year,	125
Resolutions,	126
Throes,	126
Labor,	127
Sudden Darkness,	127
The Round of Life,	128-9
The Book of Life,	129

NOREMBEGA.

“Is Norembega then a dream
Whose waking is in Heaven.”—WHITTIER.

In some old, slow-moving story
Of a far, forgotten day,
I have read how Norembega
On the fair Penobscot lay.

Norembega, slumber-city,
With its spires to the sky,
Stately streets, and many mansions
On the river flowing by.

Like a shadow, cloud, or sunshine
Streaming through the opening trees,
In the wild, unbroken forest
Lay this wanderer from the seas.

I have read, a wind-tanned voyager,
Trusting to this half-heard tale,
Northward, up the shadowy river,
From the sea-board set his sail.

Up the gentle, winding river,
Banks of rising green between,
Seeking ever Norembega,
Norembega, never seen.

Never seen, save on the river
 Gleams of light, and in the pine
 Sigh of wind, and cloud, and shadow,
 And the westering evening-shine.

I have been to Norembega,
 I have seen Penobscot stream ;
 Shall my golden vision vanish,
 Vanish like this long-lost dream ?

Is it but a cloud-built city,
 Buildd only in my brain ?
 Shall I walk the land of strangers
 When I visit it again ?

Norembega, Norembega,
 On thy deep, broad-bosomed stream,
 I have seen thee, seen thee clearer,
 Hold thee dearer, than a dream.

As I see thee, I shall seek thee ;
 As I seek thee, I shall find ;
 Find, and then the dreams may follow,
 Shutting out the world behind.

Nov. 22, 1882.

I *have* sought thee ; and have found thee
 Baseless, as an air-built dream !
 Voyaged upon thy gliding river,
 Ah ! to me a lethe stream !

Moved among thy many mansions—
 Tenantless, and dark, and cold ;
 Love face forward on the threshold
 Fallen, Hope with care grown old !

Yet there is one Norembega,
 Strange dream city, that endures ;
 Which, though life's foundations falter,
 Still my trust and faith assures.

Norembega, slumber-city,
 Morning-land of high ideal !—
 Ah ! the wonder ! ah ! the pity !
 Heaven *on earth* must prove unreal.

Oct. 29, 1890.

*Written by request for the anniversary of Mrs. Mary Moulton
 (born in Bangor), 30 years Matron of the Asylum for
 the Blind, South Boston, Mass.*

Norembega, Norembega,
 Strange dream city of the past,
 How my heart has opened to thee !
 Yes ! I know thee now, at last.

As I roll the cloudy curtain
 Of the years back from my sight,
 See ! she comes, a saintly spirit
 In her robes of flowing white.

Comes from out the home of twilight,
 From the dusky land of dreams,
 With its mystery about her,
 In her eyes its spirit-gleams.

There is weeping in the city,
 There is wailing in the wood ;
 Many long and throng to see her
 Standing there where once she stood.

But her ear hath caught the echo
 Of a clinging, lingering sound,—
 Her's alone,—like mist or vapor
 Rising dimly from the ground.

And her heart hath heard the calling—
 Her's alone—and she must fare,
 For it swells with mother's instinct—
 She shall find her children there.

So from out the shadowy city
 She has vanished, she is gone,
 But her memory lives within it
 And her love yet lingers on.

On she fares, this stranger spirit,
 Ever following the voice,
 And a something in her bosom
 Bids her beating heart rejoice.

She has found them ! she has taken
 To her breast her children dear,
 In her home hath seen the Heaven
 Tenderness on earth can rear.

Thirty years have passed, soft-stepping,
 Crowned with peace her shining brow,
 Signed the cross upon her forehead
 Saintlier than ever now.

Filled her heart with love's own fulness,
 Lit her eyes with love's own fire,
 Blessed her longing and her labor
 To the height of love's desire.

Thirty years the blind have seen her
 With the eyes of mind and soul,
 Felt her peaceful, guardian presence
 Working out life's perfect whole.

Thirty years have built a temple
 For this love-learned people here,
 And the priestess' truth and patience
 Brought the light of heaven near.

Thirty years—to man how mighty !
 But how slight in God's endeavor.
 Yet her love and life, thus lavished,
 Shall live on, love on forever.

Who, ah ! who, need sing of spirits
 While on earth such spirits dwell ?
 Who need search them out or seek them ?
 Blind can see them, dumb can tell !

Norembega, Norembega,
 Secret, dark, and silent land,
 I can hear—my ears are opened,
 I can see—and understand.

Dec. 30, 1882.

IN THE WOODS.

Here I am—out in the woods !
 Here I am—up in a tree !
 Looking, and listening, and learning,
 All things are teachers to me.
 Can you hear me—out here in the woods ?

Can you see me—up here in the tree?
 Can you hear what I hear?
 Can you see what I see?

What do the birds say?
 Why, they say it is good to be glad,
 That joy overflows the mere living
 When better is not to be had.
 What do the burrows teach?
 They teach there is life beneath,
 As above, and all around us;
 They teach there is One who see'th.
 And the squirrel's scratchy bark,
 The shadow tail, noisily coughing
 And now and then stopping to hark?
 It speaks of a fearless freedom,
 One link our life hard by
 In the endless chain of being
 That circles eternity.
 What do the breezes whisper?
 Ah! that I cannot tell,
 But be sure it is something simple
 And strong as well.
 And what says that still snapping,
 That wavering fall of the leaf?
 Why! gladness, and change for the better,
 I hear no sound of grief.
 And what, think you, does the light teach,
 That streams through the opening trees?
 It whispers that the outer world
 Knows not such scenes as these.
 Simple and few are the secrets
 Told me by nature here,

But such as they are I am happy,
 Am glad to come and hear.
 And what, pray, do the trees say?
 They say, we watch and wait
 In silence and in patience,
 It cometh soon or late.

It is good ! all is good ! God is good !
 That is their burden of song :
 Life, the mere living is good !
 Yes, it is ; who denies it is wrong.
 What do the dead leaves say,
 Ugly, useless dead leaves in the mould ?
 They say, though ye see not, we
 Cover up life from the cold
 Till spring shall bring forth and unfold.
 They say : We are part of a plan,
 All, even the meanest thing ;
 Read it, pale man, if you can,
 And your heart will brim over and sing,
 Like buds brought to blossoming.

Ah ! there is life in the woods,
 For all that they seem so still ;
 There are lessons enough to learn
 For him who will.
 It is new, it is strange, that is all,
 And men are short-sighted and tall ;
 But the air is full of wings,
 It will come like all things
 In its turn.

Then ye who would know the woods
 Stand still within them and wait,

And the secret of truth will come
 Soon or late ;
 And joy will come with it upspringing,
 And love so great
 Your life shall be filled with singing,
 No room for hate.

October, 1882.

SPRING.

I have seen the Spring, 'tis a living thing,
 Bright season of breezes and blossoming.
 I have wandered away on the windy hills,
 I have laid my lips to the laughing rills,
 To the murmurous pine I have laid mine ear
 And heard the whirr of the wind so near ;
 And listened, and listened, and heard her sing
 Sweet songs of her breezes and blossoming.

I have breathed fresh strength from the bare brown
 mould,
 With its odor of earth, and the loamy ground
 Where the grasses and greener grains are found,
 And the close-balled fists of the fern unfold ;
 Or the cowslip hollows her cup of gold
 O'er the mirroring brook that cries : Behold !

I have watched the shooting of grass and leaves
 To cover the nests the field mouse weaves,
 And the bare, barked trees spread their carpet of
 green
 Where birds may sing and not be seen.
 Watched the sheathed bud and the red-tipt stem

Of the rosy maple and purplish elm,
 And the trailing pine, and the wintergreen
 With its withered red berries, and, in between,
 On the grey-green moss, and yellow, and brown,
 And the lichen's red-yellow cup looked down.

I have wet my cheek with the misty rain,
 I have heard the song-birds' scattered strain
 In showers of melody pattering down,
 Bright drop on drop till the senses drown.
 I have wandered away through shine and storm,
 From the bleak windsweeps, with their frost of
 flowers,
 Their lichens, and moss, and trailing vine,
 Where the wood shows the rabbit's vanishing form,
 And the valley teems with the wandering showers,
 And the slender creepers linger and twine
 Round the rough grey rocks and the ground-birds'
 bowers.
 Seen the windflower waving high up on the hill,
 The columbines ringing their bells o'er the rock,
 And the quaint Quaker-ladies out driving their flock,
 And the tripping and tumbling Jack and Jill.
 Seen the leaves' young seeds and the ferns' young
 spores,
 And the insects sitting with open doors,
 And the dear dandelion that pines far from home,
 And the fleet-footed mercury eager to roam,
 And the strawberry peeping from under her leaves,
 And the thin filmy web that the night-spider weaves;
 And the thistle nests, and the tasseled grass
 That waves on the hill where the shadows pass;
 And the white nun-violet fording the brook

With her charity-cap and her down-cast look ;
 And the pitcher-plants lying in wait in the wave,
 And the Jack-in-the-pulpit with no souls to save.
 And many a friend of familiar face
 But name unknown, whose delicate grace
 Must claim in my mind a mention and place.

So I wander, and breathe, and shout, and sing,
 Till my heart is abloom with the swelling of spring.

1882-3.

IN THE BAY.

Dead ! Drowned !
 The still, the sullen tide,
 Hath groped, hath groaned, hath grasped, hath found,
 A suicide !

A woman who defied,
 Leapt—life to death, one bound—
 And sank—to the other side.

Impassive and impenetrable glide
 The glooming waters, cicatrice the wound,
 The world whirls on around:
 One, only, died !

The moonlight whitens on the waters wide,
 Wharves, ships,—on one dead face beside.
 A smile ?—a sound ?—
 'Tis the moon, and the breeze,—the dead drowned !

Out to the void unknown
 A soul has thrown ;
 Cast earth's slave-shackle off, life's feet had tied,
 To roam—free ? healed ? cleansed ? calmed ? contented
 grown ?

She who sighed,
 Gave moan for moan
 With the dead water's dying groan?—
 To tread the gloried morning skies,
 Kneel now at foot of that white throne
 Waiting the word, creative tone,
 From One alone?—
 "Arise."

Had she stood long, looked long below
 Where the cold creeping currents flow
 Slow, oh! so slow,
 Next her swift stream of woe?

Had she come oft, and come again,
 And thought, and tried, and shuddered back
 And sought her home—locked in—in vain!
 And trod again fate's fearful track,
 And done the deed—one last look back—
 And felt the swelling, surging hold
 Of this world's life, loves, hopes, aches, fold
 Her, helpless, in those clutches cold?
 Shrieked, struggled, snatched, and sunk,—untold?

Or a pant, and passionate leap, and a throw,
 With the blood at a boil, and the white hate aglow,
 Swift sneer at the sloth of the empty years,
 Wild scorn of the world with its fears and tears,
 And a stride, and a prayer, and a plunge,—and so?

Was it dark? no shine in her soul? no sun?
 A cant to the wrong she could not shun?
 A slipping, a sliding, a sinking down,
 A hopeless horror she needs must drown

In the one way left—the waters brown,
Shown off, thrown out, by the heedless town?

What fearful force so filled the world—
No room!—out, out, *one* soul was hurled?
What bitter blast, what wave of woe
Broke earth's last, fast hold, let her go
Loosed, cast adrift, flung off from life,
Spurned on in scorn and shame and strife,
Where—she has dreamed, but none may know?

What fevered shame, crazed, fire-burnt brain;
Dull, fading, crumbling, dumb decays;
What wild delirium of pain,
Hot living nights, cold dying days;
What superhuman tug and strain,
So sprung the curb, so slacked the rein?

Mystery here!—mystery there!
There? ah!—Here: doubt, death, despair!
The choking calm, the stony stare,
The blending of a breath in air.
God grant that lone soul's prayer,
God grant that prayer!

Scout, jeer, sneer, scoff, upbraid, who dare,
Blame, shame, defame her, silent there!
I dare not, I. I dare not dare.

Ha! the white mist, body of death,
Clammy and chill, ghastly and still,
Shrouding the scene from eye and ear,
As one who saith:

Pry not! peer not! probe not, here!
'Tis done—pass on—nor interfere.

Janv. 19, 1885.

THE CRY OF THE SUICIDE.

"JUDGE NOT."

I have thought, and the lot is cast ;
I am dead, and the struggle is past ;
And I live,—yes ! I live, at last.

And you cry : Cowardice, and For Shame !
Ah ! your tongues are too ready to blame,
One only there is who can name.

Ye who dwell in the vales below,
Of the merciless blasts little know
That away on the hill-tops blow :

Ye see the calm currents flow,
Ye see but the surface show,
Knowing naught of their springs in the snow.

What do you know of the years
That channel the cheek with tears ?
Of the maddening cares and fears ?

What do you know of the strife,
The canker that eats like a knife,
That is lodged at the heart of a life ?

When have you seen the soul,
Or a tithe of the awful whole,
Where the thunders of conscience roll ?

Ah ! back to your seats and be still !
Bow down to the stormier will
Of a life that its life can kill :

Kill the sin, and, free as a dove,
With a martyr's faith in the love
And pardon of God, fly above.

Oh ! never you dare to say
 It is wrong ! but pity and pray
 For the soul on its perilous way.

And think that it, too, saw each side
 Of the stream whose tempestuous tide
 Doth death from our life divide.

And think not it fled aghast
 From the faces of future and past,
 But fell where it stood to the last.

Then, when you have sunk to the end,
 Have never a sorrow to spend,
 Then censure, my friend, or commend.

March, 1882.

OUT OF THE DEEP.

Out of the deep I cry :
 Help, or I perish here !
 O God, though Thou art nigh
 Yet am I full of fear.

I stand upon the brink
 And cannot but look in,
 Oh ! strengthen me to shrink
 Back from my eager sin.

'Tis not enough to know
 That Thou art ever near ;
 Take me to heart, and so
 Shall I be sheltered here.

I have fought well the fight
 So long as there was day,
 But now the shades of night
 Are sweeping me away.

I find myself alone
 Amid the gathering gloom ;
 Lord, let my grief atone,
 Seal not my living tomb !

Father ! I cry to Thee
 With my departing breath,
 Except Thou succor me
 I darkly sink to death.

I'm sweeping out to sea
 And well nigh spent for strength,
 O, God, deliver me
 At length, my God ! at length.

I lift my voice on high
 Though drowned amid the din,
 O, Father, hear my cry
 Above this clamorous sin !

Out of the deep I cry
 And choke beneath the wave,
 Help ! hear me, or I die !
 I sink,—O, Savior, save !

Feb'y 14, 1882.

A FALLEN STAR.

Pity and pray, pity and pray,
 For the light that is lost to-night as to-day,
 From sight away,
 Ah ! pity and pray.

THE NORTH WIND.

Blow ! Blow ! Blow !

Blustery Boreas,

Blow !

Crack thy cheeks, and split thy sides,
Roll thy swift tempestuous tides
O'er the ocean of the cloud ;
From the silences of snow
Shout thy battle cry aloud.
Wake the world with thunder tone !
Spread thy wings athwart the sky !
With thy streaming locks alight
To the sunny southward fly
From the caverns of the night,
The lifeless land God walks alone.
Fill the windless void of space !
Take the earth to thine embrace !
Wrestle with the hills and bruise
The boulders neath thy trampling shoes !
Crack the stiff backs of the trees,
Bow them down, thou kingly breeze !
Sound the bugles of the blast,
Strike the minds of men aghast !
Yet kindly is thy cavernous heart,
Like mother to her child thou art.
Health and strength thy right hand fill,
Strength and wealth of stalwart will ;
Danger and disease and death
Are blown away by thy chill breath ;
Thy wild mysterious music brings
A sense of superhuman things,
And thy weird cadences unroll
Immortal thoughts that thrill the soul.

Then loud and long shout out thy song !
 Wind of the North
 Come forth !
 Blow ! Blow ! Blow !
 Blustery Boreas,
 Bachelor Boreas,
 Blow !

Jan'y, 1882.

STILL HOURS.

How wondrous the stillness of winter
 When never a bird is heard,
 When the nests hang bare in the sunshine,
 Nor a branch by the breeze is stirred.

When over the earth there is fallen
 A slumber as deep as death,
 But the fullness of life beneath it
 Is felt in its balmy breath.

How blest to the weary-hearted
 This peace in the midst of strife,
 This glimpse of days departed,
 This rest in their stormy life.

Ah ! soft as the touch of a spirit
 This calm sinks into the soul,
 We are strong again to suffer
 And the bruised heart is whole.

March, 1882.

CLEAR AFTER STORM.

All night long the pitiless storm,
The bleak wind and the rushing rain,
Pressed against my window pane,
Struggling, peering through the din,
Hungry for the warmth within.

All night long the leafless trees
Stood and shivered in the snow,
Sobbed and motioned to and fro,
Muttering with voices faint
Their monotonous complaint.

All night long the storm-winds blew,
The windows rattled, the house shook ;
Yet bright and fresh the mornings's look,
Cool and crisp the cloudless air
With sunshine sparkling everywhere.

Out of my chamber window I gazed :
The spreading elms were all aglow
That had wakened my sleepy pity so,
Columns of crystal glittering bright,
Their branches sheeted with silver light !

And a smile stole lightly over my lips,
And even such storms, after all, thought I,
Must bring their blessing by and by ;
And the worst of woes we bear on earth
May be meant to bring new joys to birth.

Feb'y. 1882.

DAVE.

Hain't heern o' Dave? brave Dave?

Wall thet is curiss naow!

Hain't heern o' Dave? our Dave!

Set daown! I'll tell ye haow.

Dave's dead, an' Dave's my son.—

(Thanks, strenger, thet's tew late),

But Dave—Dave wur the *he-est* one

To iv'ry one's consate.

Thet boy—ye see I bringed 'im up

An' callate fur ter know—

He wur the peartest, cutest pup,

Ye niver see sich *go*.

But Dave's dead naow! 'Twarn't nary use,

Our Dave, he hed ter go.

Yaas, yaas! Jest haow'd it happen?

Thet's wot I'm goin' ter tell!

Set daown! this cheer *here*, Cap'n!

Comfort yersel a spell.

Cum cluss, my eyes is dizzy,

They doant see naow so well;

I used 'em putty busy

Bygones, a little fel.

At foorteen, I wur fishin'

Aboord th' ole Foamin' Wave,

Dad sed,—but ye wur wishin'

Ter hear about my Dave.

I onst wur sum considerble

Ter han'le, fore I shrunk,

But Dave, my boy, wur turrerble,

Chock full o' grit an' spunk;

He *wur* so stout, thet Dave, my son,
 He'd clean 'is Daddy out
 Afore I cud a hollered "Done"
 My bes' days roun' about.
 An' warn't Dave smart!
 I see 'im naow, young shaver, lis'nen low,
 A stannen smilen, why, I vaow!
 A hearin' hisself grow.
 But 'twarn't no use! My Dave, my boy,
 He hed ter go.

They married young, the simples!—
 (Ye ne'er see sech a gurl,
 Sech smiles, an' eyes, an' dimples,
 An' fair hair all a-curl.)
 An' Dave struck out a fishin',
 Boat-fishin' in the sea;
 An' she at home, a wishin',
 Ez happy ez ken be.
 But 'twarn't no use! Dave hed ter go,
 An' so hed she.

Wall, Dave sot out one mornin'—
 (He *wur* a head-strong boy!
 Ye cud n' give 'im warnin',
 Wust storms he'd best enjoy!)
 All night the win' wur moanin',
 An' shakin' at the door;
 An' th' ole sea a-groanin',
 An' reachin' up the shore;
 An' all the sky wur smirry
 Wi' scud a-driven by;
 But Dave ye *cud n' wurry*,
 That day he *wur* so *high*.

He patted 'is wife's shoul'er
 (Poor gell ! I see it well)
 An' kissed the little chiller
 A stannen on the sell ;—
 Dave allers hed a hearty way
 About 'im, d' ye know,
 An' uv all days !—
 But 'twarn't no use ! Our Dave,
 He hed ter go.

He histed on 'is helya'ds,
 An' jibed 'er over free,
 An' waved 'is han' back towards
 'Is wife an' chillen three,
 An', stronger, *thet there* wur the last
 O' Dave we iver see !

The win' *went mad* that arternoon,
 It blew a livin' gale !
 But, 'bout our boy, Dave, we heern soon,
 For onst I heerd a hail,
 Way off, as drowneded in the sea,
 An' deffened by the noise,
 An' out o' door I went to see
 My Dave, my last o' boys.

Strenger, ef I fergit thet cry
 Afore my dyin' day,
 Wud God thet minit I may die !
 My boy wur *miles away*
 Then, w'en I heern thet long, low cry
 Cum sweepin' up the bay.

It blew, it blew a livin' gale,
 An', w'en I heern thet cry,

My Dave, full twenty mile away,
 Wur tearin' by the light, they say,
 Way out on Shovel Tail.
 Wi' nothin' but a rag o' sail,
 The lightman, wi' 'is glass,
 Watched Dave, my boy, brow bare an' pale,
 Drive on ter death—an' pass !

The seas cum thun'erin' in 'is wake
 Wi' open mouths afoam,
 But Dave, brave Dave, no wave cud shake,
 His heart wur safe at home !

An' there, braced back, they saw 'im stan',
 An' once he shouted hoarse,
 An' turned, an' looked, an' waved 'is han',
 Then kep' 'er to 'er course.
 An' out into the storm he sped,
 Through fog, an' win', and sea,
 Straight out o' sight, nor turned his head,
 Dave,—all was lef' ter me !

'Ithin a week 'is wife lay dead,—
 "Heartbroken," so the neighbors said,—
 An' we are all—you see,
 Three chillen here—an' me.

1882.

"UNCLE MORRIS."—A True Story.

Ole Uncle Morris to buil' an' plan,
 An' work wi' 'is tools, wur a master man.
 His head wur full o' knicks and knacks,
 He cud frame ye a house wi' 'is big broad-axe,

Wi' 'is chisel an' knife he cud buil' a boat
 As wud whip anything uv her inches afloat,
 Fur 'is grit an' nerve into iv'ry plank
 Was driv, an' she *hed* ter git up an' spank.
 He would hew ye an' anchor-stock, shave ye a mast,
 An' he'd cuss at the chips fur a flyin' so fast,
 Fur a mos' cantankerous critter, too,
 Wur ole Uncle Morris, to them as knew.

He wur tearin' aroun' in the old ship-yard
 An' swearin' away by the cubic yard,
 He wur out o' sorts wust way, 'twas plain
 Suthin' had gone agin the grain.
 He'd sot out in a rag'lar stiddy stream,—
 Rale fun fur the boys, fur they knew to see 'im,
 W'en 'e smiled in thet kin o' riley way
 An' snapped 'is black eyes, 'twas the doose ter pay.

'Twas time fur dinner an' in 'e went,
 Wi' 'is mouth shet tight, an' 'is black brow bent,
 Spread one big han' on either knee,
 An' called fur 'is grub an' 'is cup o' tea.
 An' dipped in 'is head, an' tuk some sips,
 An' wiped wi' the back o' 'is hand 'is lips,
 An' wrinkled 'is crooked ole Roman nose,
 An' snorted out as a porpus blows,
 "Thunderation! what's this?" says he,
 "Durned, dirty dishwater! I axed fur tea."
 An' the ole woman—deffer'n a haddick was she—
 Says smilin': "Hev ye sweet'nin' enough fur ye?"
 "Sweet'nin'!" says he, wall I'll be switched!
Tea begrudged and water bewitched!
 A half-hour's sun on Demin's pond,
 An' an ounce o' tea, wur 'way beyond!

Tea! don't talk tea ter me,
 I'll be *bagditioned* ef I can see
 Why sich a *flabbergastigated*
 Woman critter was iver created."
 An' snatched up 'is hat, an' out he tore,
 An' away out o' sight, an' swore, an' swore.

An' one uv the fellers over yender
 Ripped out in a roar, an' says, says he,
 "Wall, uv all the sprees I iver see
 Warn't thet '*a harmonious ole hell-bender*?' "

September 12, 1882.

PLANTATION SONG.

O de night war dark,
 So berry dark,
 Darkle as a pocket ;
 Wid here an' dere a fire-fly spark
 A sparkin' like a rocket.

An' I kim along de road ter de swamp,
 Darkle as a pocket,
 A gwine on on ma way fo' ter see old Pomp,
 Dark, so dark.
 W'en I sudden see a nigger a settin' on a post,
 An' he looked so w'ite I tuk 'im fo' a ghost,
 Fo' de night war dark,
 O berry dark,
 Darkle as a pocket.

I stopped, an' I looked, an' I shivered, an' I sighed,
 Till my teef spok out though ma tongue was tied,

An' my knees kep' a knockin' uv an orful kin' o' tune
Till I didn' know a-nuthin wot the worl' I was a-doin'.

Dark, so dark,

Darkle as a pocket.

Wen a "Haw haw, hoo hoo, hee hee, hey!"—

Kim off'n thet fence as plain as day,

An' "Golly! I tuk ye fo' de debbil, sho 'nuff,
Wid yer hair out o' crimp, an' yer monsus huff,

O Golly! I tuk ye fo' de debbil"—

Fo' de night war dark,

O berry dark,

Darkle as a pocket,

Wid here an' dere a fire-fly spark

A sparkin' like a rocket.

Now w'ich on us was de nigger mos' skeered,

I'm sho' I don' know,

But twarn't ole Pompey, I'm afeard,

Or else he cudn' laf so.

O dat ole nigger he's wun'ous sly,

Wid a curus roun'-de-corner eye,

He'll see de debbil by-um-by,

W'ere de night am dark,

O berry dark,

Darkle as a pocket,

Wid suthin more'n a fire-fly spark

A-sparkin' like a rocket!

1881.

BITS OF LIFE.—*A Rencontre.*

A railroad car, with jolt and jar
Just starting from the station,
A maiden neat, an ample seat,
The scene and situation.

And sauntering by, with restless eye,
 A youth of one and twenty ;
 A swift side glance, he—takes the chance,
 Though empty seats are plenty.

A look, a nod, and soon is heard
 The hum of conversation,
 As, with a crash, the window sash
 Awakens animation.

And mile on mile they sit and smile,
 And talk with one another,
 As lovingly as they might be
 Some sister and her brother.

Her bonnet brown sinks softly down
 On his supporting shoulder,
 And round her waist his arm is placed
 Gallantly to uphold her.

Alas ! down brakes ! the maid awakes,
 Starts, smiles, and—he has kissed her !
 And, hands held fast, they hurry past,—
 Myself, and my small sister.

1883.

YE MISTLETOE.

I smiled as she sat by the mistletoe,
 Smiled sly to myself within,
 And followed the firelight's wavering glow
 O'er cheek and brow, breast heaving slow,
 Forced, idle fingers folded in,
 Drooped eyes,—well, asleep? oh ! no.

I laughed as she gave me the mistletoe,
 Laughed loud to myself within,
 And looked at her lips provoking so,—
 Proud, pouting lips,—the throat's full flow,
 The cunning dimple and curving chin,
 Looked only,—and laughed. No, no !

How lightly she lifted the mistletoe,
 Wan berries and leafage thin,
 And gave it again !—she could not know,
 As she played with the branchlets to and fro,
 What tempting thoughts were astir within,
 Or did she, demure ? Oh ! no.

I take from her fingers my mistletoe,
 And bid her a gay good-night,
 And turn to the door, in act to go,
 When the full-orbed darks of her eyes outthrow
 A shower of sparks, lips laugh outright,—
 Could I—would you—go ? No, no !

I had heard of the moon, and the mistletoe
 Atwine on the Druid oak ;
 I had always thought it a tale, you know,
 Had thought it such, could treat it so,
 Till lips looked up, till smiles outspoke.
 And I skeptical still ? oh ! no.

Since then we have seen, by the chimney-bow,
 Years fifty come and go ;
 Seen joy and peace and plenty grow
 With summer's warmth and winter's snow,
 But not forgot the mistletoe,—
 My wife and I,—no ! no !

Feb. 5, 1883.

AT OUR FEET.

Once the traveled highway
 Dustily I trod,
 Now I walk the by-way
 Hand in hand with God.

Once the road I followed
 Gazing at the sky,
 Wondering why heaven
 Was stowed away so high.

Now by lane and farm-gate,
 Fields where flowers are found,
 I have learned to locate
 Heaven on the ground :

Known that they who purely,
 Earnestly will find
 Life's low lessons, surely
 Heaven have in their mind.

1882.

THE TEACHING OF GRIEF.

I wandered down the road,
 I stepped within the wood,
 And silence, nature's sentinel,
 Challenged where I stood.

"What have you brought to me?
 What is the word with you?
 Only the good, the free,
 Can safe pass through.

" I search the minds of men,
 Show them themselves at length ;
 What is thy wisdom, then ?
 What is thy strength ?

" None enter here, and stay,
 But bring a larger life ;
 Come not to take away,
 But give—or cease thy strife ! "

I turned away my head,
 And backward did begin ;
 " I have known grief," I said,—
 " 'Tis good, then enter in."

1882.

WINTER.

The snowflakes are fluttering busily down,
 So still is the breath of the wind,
 And thoughts that the voice of the world cannot drown
 Are travelling thus through my mind.

But they're fading as fast as the swift falling flakes,
 And the new are obscuring the old,
 And though warm is my bosom with love for their
 sakes,
 They leave me alone and a-cold.

March, 1882.

HOPE.

'Twas cold, there were snows on the ground,
 And winds of the winter a-wing,
 When up leapt my heart with a bound,
 I heard a bird sing—it was Spring.

I'm sure I don't know why I should,
 I thought I would tell it to you,
 Perhaps it may do you some good,
 Perhaps!—it will then have helped *two*.

March 25, 1883.

DAWN.

The winds are listening close to the sea,
 A tremulous light fills the shadowy sky,
 The darkness is drawn, and the day is nigh
 New create in purity.

The sea seems young, with the night new-born,
 The wondering world wakes fresh from sleep :—
 The motionless ocean is life's great deep,
 And death is the name of the dawn.

March, 1883.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

A rising ripple on the stream
 That smoothens, widens to the sea,
 Shines, toward the hills, with sunlit gleam,
 But, oceanward, a shade I see.

And such is man—his peace and strife—
 Of stream a ripple, breeze a breath ;
 The sun upon his back is life,
 The shadow on his face is death.

March, 1883.

SPRING OF THE SPIRIT.

There are no flowers in the field,
 But they who listen hear the thrush ;
 I gather songs off every bush,
 For, when I ask, they always yield.
 So, though it is a season chill,
 And I no flower in field can find,
 I gather songs from out the wind,
 With these my longings still.

March 25, 1883.

TWO LOVERS.

Earth holds two lovers, poles apart,
 Though momentarily they meet,
 Yet may not stay, fold heart to heart
 And separate as fleet.
 Though known to all, beheld of none
 Alive and in the breath ;
 World old, time new ; men call the one
 And other—Life and Death.

March, 1883.

OPPORTUNITY.

Mid winds of March I wandered forth,
 In snow and wintry weather,
 To try to find some sign of spring
 Amid the hill-side heather.

I saw the withered mullein stalk,
 I saw the sumac cluster,
 The barberry's red-berried bush,
 The mosses early muster.

The thorns upon the sweetbriar
 Thrust out their bayonets bristling,
 But brambles a'l, not one red rose
 Where wind and I went whistling,

But in the bright mid-summer month
 My heart of hope beat higher,
 I stole away my treasure-trove,
 My rose with soul of fire.

I looked for sting, or scratch, or wound,
 Resistance without measure ;
 But when I came and claimed my own,
 I found—but thee, my treasure.

March 2, 1883

LONGING.

I wonder if ocean remembers
 The time of the brook and the bee ?
 The learning to talk and to toddle
 Through flowers and fields to the sea ?

If earth and her sun-song yet gladden ?
 Youth's pleasure in struggle and strife ?
 Or ocean is feeling, I wonder,
 Alone in its largeness of life ?

And grieves for the leaves of the forrest,
 The hill-side, the spring by the stone,
 And reaches its arms up the rivers,
 And turns in its dreams, and makes moan ?

I think in its moments of mildness,
 When waves are as smile in the sun,
 Its thoughts are away in the woodland,
 The first and the last life are one.

Think ocean hath moods of forgetting,
 Retreading hill, thicket, and plain ;
 Of dancing the daisies a measure,
 Of singing life's love-song again.

But aye and anon the old feeling
 Of loneliness lifts up its cry,
 And the wailing spreads over the waters,
 The weeping sweeps over the sky.

Ah ! yes, I believe grey old ocean
 Remembers, as age holds in me,
 The home and the hopes of its childhood
 Now hid in the heart of the sea.

Feels the reason and fitness of living
 Its life in these serious ways,
 Yet cannot help longing and looking
 Back, back, on youth's happier days.

E FLUMINE.

The lily, from the river deep,
What flight of time bespoke her?
What restless yearning broke her sleep?
What dream of sunshine woke her?

Among the dark and dubious things
At bottom of the river,
What whitest flash of angel wings
Set all her heart a-quiver?

She long had lain in silence there
Below the shoaling water,
But now she rises to the air,
What stir of blood hath brought her?

And now she reaches to the sun,
Her maiden arms unfolding,
And gazes at the golden one
In speechless joy beholding.

What hopes within her bosom rise,
So dimmed within the river?
What passion lifts her to the skies
And Him, the great all-giver.

I say it was the light above
From slumbrous depths could win her,
I say it was the smile of love
So stirred the soul within her.

And on the stream of life she floats
In sunshine with her lover,
Nor heeds the woodbird's whistling notes,
Nor hears the calling plover.

Erelong the night, with kisses cold,
 Her heat of love shall shiver,
 But she the tale of life hath told
 Forever, in the river.

Ad lumen.

May, 1887.

INFLUENCE.

I went to the hill for a walk,
 I wandered away on the heath,
 I loosened a sheath from its stalk,
 I parted a seed from the sheath.

'Twas quickly and carelessly wrought ;
 I started, beginning to sing,
 When all of a sudden I thought :
 Hath God brought me here for this thing ?

And often, in commonest talk,
 I've stopped and have wondered since then,
 Have I loosened a sheath from its stalk,
 Dropped a seed in the bosoms of men ?

The small holds the secret of life,
 By little things grow to be great,
 Then pause from your hurry and strife,
 Think twice ere forever too late.

No man and no thing but hath hid
 A strength and a beauty and grace
 In the heart of him, and we are bid
 To bring it to light in each face.

Then think as you carelessly walk
 Beaten street or the breeze-blowing heath,
 You may loosen a sheath from the stalk,
 Drop a seed, by God's will, from the sheath.

1883.

“LET THE WHOLE CREATION CRY.”

The brooks to the ocean are singing,
 The birds through the blue of the sky,
 The bees in the flowers down flinging
 And back bringing sun-sweets,—and I,

Must I be wise nature's one creature
 Deaf, dumb, when Thy praises are sung,
 God, Savior, Creator, Sustainer,—
 Or try with my stumbling tongue?

Or lift up my heart unto heaven,
 My soul with its o'er written score,
 And sing on the best that is given,
 And trust Thee to make the less more.

Though harsh be the sound of that singing,
 Alas! shall it ever be said,
 Sea, sky with Thy praises were ringing,
 I—man only—mute, hung my head?

Sing on, hidden birds in the tree-tops ;
 Flow on, happy brooks to the sea ;
 Brisk bee, honey-bathe on the hill-tops ;
 My song and my soul are with thee.

I long to roll on in the chorus,
 To lift up my cry through the air,
 To One bending low, listening o'er us,
 And offer my praise and my prayer.

To feel in the silence a pleasure,
 A patience, a peace, far above
 Earth's measure ; to stand in His presence,
 Life finite in infinite love.

To beat out the days into blessing,
 Close clasped to His sheltering breast,
 Life's wrongs in one swan-song redressing,
 And rest—ah ! enough—only rest.

Rest—not in neglect of this living,
 But fullness of faith, and soul-strength
 Whose generous joys of outgiving
 Show God's love in man's life at length.

1883.

UNDERTONES.

I gathered a sound of singing,
 A dim, hid sound it seemed,
 So faint and far I wondered
 Whether I waked or dreamed.

I listened, and rose, and followed,
 And saw, in the shadowy air,
 A sorrowing spirit outpouring
 Its longing and passion in prayer.

And its speech was strong with yearning,
 Love's infinite bosom-beat,
 Grief's passionate reaching and searching,
 Earth's sense of the incomplete.

No ! never had music such meaning,
 Such feeling pervasive and free,
 Such overflow of sorrow,
 Such craving for sympathy.

There was earth, and hell, and heaven,
 Life, death, in that one wild cry,
 Grief's melancholy minor,
 Joy's harmony heaven-high.

How I held my breath and listened
 As, wakening sense and soul,
 The melody angelic
 Over my being stole.

How I trembled to feel it flowing
 Through artery, nerve, and brain,
 Strength-giving, life-giving, uplifting
 With wingbeats of pleasure and pain.

How I hungered, and hoped, and famished,
 And struggled to catch—in vain—
 One fluttering strain of the angel
 To sing to myself again.

I hear it sinking, swelling,
 Lingering, clinging still ;
 Remember, or reach it, I cannot,
 My spirit song, do what I will.

Can tears never satisfy sorrow ?
 Can love never longing fulfill ?
 Must memory always be singing
 Life's song so heart-stricken and ill ?

Ah ! long have I listened and followed :
 May sorrow ne'er cease from her strife ?
 The spirit that sings is *my spirit*,
 The song is *the song of my life*.

Jan'y, 1883.

THE TORMENTOR.

Go, hide thyself, thou man of sorrow,
 And take thy troubles and thy tears
 Away from me, lest, on the morrow,
 Myself, like thee, be full of fears.

Ah ! whisper not thy griefs unto me,
 For I have woes enough at heart,
 Haste, haste away ! ere thou undo me
 And bring me from my better part.

Alas ! alas ! 'Tis vain complaining,
 He will not cease, he will not go ;
 And now I see—no longer feigning,
 It is *myself* torments me so.

1882.

REGRET.

The babble of brooks in the river,
 The song of the streams in the sea,
 Sing on in their new life forever,
 Forever, old nature, for thee.

My streamlets are choked with the grasses,
 Have wandered afar from the way,
 Have stopped in their searching and singing
 This many, ah ! many a day.

1887.

RESIGNATION.

We've lost our leaves, old mother tree,
 Our nesting birds and breezes,
 The sun and shade, were wont to be,
 In mingling gleam and murmurous glee,
 Our summer day-dream,—bitterly
 This winter weather freezes.

Is heart grown cold, old mother tree ?
 Is hope less young and hardy ?
 The dreams of youth may fade and flee
 But life's forever full and free,
 And we are yet the nesting tree,
 Though time be ne'er so tardy.

1887

THE VOICE OF AGE.

Hath the leaf left a loss on the tree-limb
 In fluttering down to the ground ?
 Can the branch and the breezes yet feel him,
 Gone off, in the grief newly found ?

Soon the boughs will be bare of surrounding,
 Though winter is not yet come nigh,
 And the wind in the leaves will be sounding
 Its last lullaby, lullaby.

So when life's songs are fading and falling,
 And blindly the wind wanders by,
 When the spirit all dumbly is calling,
 I will lift up *my* arms to the sky,

Hold the faith in my heart's depth, root-living,
 To blossom again in the Spring,
 And praise Thee with silent thanksgiving,
 When lips now no longer may sing.

1887.

LISTENING AND LOOKING.

'Tis evening, when the cricket sings,
 And the shrill frog, with piping harsh,
 Croaks to his mate in the sounding marsh,
 And still night with strange noises rings.

One by one, from the shade of the sun,
 The stars creep out, now the wind is still ;
 The dew falls fresh on the moonlit hill,
 Sleep spreads her wings, and the day is done.

So when eve binds up the scattered sheaves
 Of each day's labor, and all is still,
 Life's speechless creatures flutter and fill
 My soul with songs like the whisper of leaves.

And the night bursts into blossoms of light
 With the trembling thoughts aglow within,
 For the spirit, stunned by day's deafening din,
 Now opens on nature its questioning sight.

Old earth seems filled with a million beams
 Of sunbright beauty ; its ceaseless sound,
 Like freshening streams, my soul flows round,
 As I look, and listen, and read its dreams.

And my song grows full, and deep, and strong,
 Catching the meaning of Nature and night,
 Learning the likeness of darkness and light,
 Borne on the flow of the under-song.

Sept., 1882.

BELIEF.

Can I imagine more than Is
 In my strait line of being?
 Can I illumine more than Is
 With my faint light of seeing?

Can I, a creature little worth,
 Have hopes and thoughts more living,
 More meaning, than this life, this earth?
 Who gave this life all-giving?

Can I impersonate and frame
 An all wise, kind creator
 If death hems my horizon? shame!
 Life's sojourner? spectator?

From what could I construct, foresee,
 Such stretch of hope and feeling?
 Am I the greater Mystery?
 Am I the All-revealing?

I say each thought that shakes the soul,
 Sensation, aspiration,
 Must typify an ampler whole,
 Life's uncreate creation.

I say each life is but a ray
 Of light earth's little hour
 Yields up to the eternal day
 Of progress and of power.

I say these shadows are the one
 Thing tangible about us,
 Innate, create, the proof of sun
 In other worlds without us.

Is every instinct, interest,
 But barren-born to perish?
 Hope, faith, love, life, a brutal jest?
 Not even death to cherish?

Must idle man alone stand still,
 Life be what crickets chirp us,
 When all the world is plan, and will,
 Force, cause, and working purpose?

Whence come these thoughts? They are not mine!
 Faiths, feelings, far above me?
 Through doubt's dark clouds, in bright sunshine,
 God's face looks down to love me.

Feby., 1887.

SOME PEOPLE.

You have met men, I dare say,
 In the critical course of your life,
 Whose thoughts lay hid from the day
 Deep down in their hearts, till strife
 Summoned their powers to play,
 When they kindled with glory the way.

You have called them solemn and slow,
 You have thought them stupid as fools,
 And they have flashed forth with a thought or so
 That crumbled to dust your rules ;
 And by sensitive signs of hand, mouth, and eyes,
 You have seen what tempests in them may rise.

I mean not clowns, of course,
 Head forward, mouth agape,
 I mean a restful, silent force
 Of temperate mien and shape.
 I'll read you their riddle, end ere you begin,
 They are flint o' the outside, fire within.

1882.

FAME.

On earth's rude granite who would carve his name
 Full many a bruise and fall must find ere fame,
 And fame itself stand such a stress of weather
 That dust to dust they crumble oft together.

QUATRAIN.

"Time's all too short ! what bliss if there could be,
 As in life's fulness, now eternity !"
 Yes, yes, that possibility were prime,
 Unless we'd wish eternity then time.

PEACE.

I stood in the midst of the wood,
 Still as the trunk of a tree,
 Waiting, waiting,
 What God would show to me.
 And He showed me nothing,
 Nothing but what I before had seen,
 But I brought back, I brought back something
 I had lost in the time between.

Oct., 1882.

YGDASIL.—Tree of Life.

The seed of generous nurture,
 Though slow its bloom of birth,
 With foliage and fruitage
 Shall overspread the earth,
 Shall overspread the roomy earth
 And overshadow the sky :
 Faith is its root, and Hope its girth,
 And Love it climbeth by.

1882.

SEXTAIN.

When yet my thought was in the tender leaf,
 Long, long ago, so easy to remember,
 I knew not then what men were calling grief,
 But now, before this barren, bleak December,
 I recognize the meaning of that strife,
 They used to call it grief, I call it *life*.

1882.

GIFTS.

Gifts? what are gifts? Is not life all giving?
 There are those who gift simply by their living;
 By a look, a word, by their presence near us,
 We are shaken, stirred, so they lift and cheer us.

ELOQUENCE.

The best of thoughts lie deep, and out of range of
 speech,
 'Tis only noble living their nobleness can teach.

CARESSES.

As wavelets ripple on a pebbly shore
 With gentle murmur of a sweet content,
 In bubbling laughter lave its rocky floor
 On soft caress and coy retreat intent,

Gathering fresh courage from each new embrace,
 Escaping only to return apace
 In wanton merriment.

As gentle zephyrs sway the spreading trees,
 That, yielding slowly backward, quick return,
 Eager to meet the wooing of the breeze
 Making their hearts with fiery ardor burn,
 While the sun's rays quick darting midst the boughs
 Seek to commingle in a glad carouse
 With the cool air, perfumed with sweetest fern.

So baby with her dainty finger tips,
 Her dimpled hands of rare infantile grace,
 Doth stroke fond mother's kiss-returning lips
 And shower angel touches on her face;
 In gurgling laughter drawing back the while,
 Gazing with great blue eyes, with baby smile,
 Then leaps to her embrace.

Dec., 1878.

BUBBLES.

Children blowing bubbles
 To the toying of the breeze,
 With no thought of troubles
 As though life were made of these.

Girt within the glittering globe
 Is the earth of their young eyes ;
 In her shifting, shimmering robe
 Life, of thousand colors, lies.

'Tis their innocence divining
 How fate's tangled threads unroll ;
 Suns of truth in beauty shining
 Through their spotless depths of soul.

For the world and we are bubbles
 With the life-light trembling through,
 Sailing o'er a sea of troubles,
 Soon to vanish in the blue.

1881.

BABY.

In among the tickle-tops, all among the timothy,
 Nodding at the clover balls and the daisy dimity,
 Following the butterflies, and the bees' low mumbling,
 Blowing back the saucy wind, step and then a stum-
 bling ;
 Catching lanky grasshoppers with her heart at pit-a-
 pat,
 Sitting down to chit and chat with the crazy kitty-cat,
 Watching daddy-long-legs crawl, sending home the
 lady-bug,
 In the wind-white grasses tall, nestling so very snug;
 Knitting dandelion chains and the stem ends curling,
 Staggering and tumbling, so the world goes whirling,
 Reaching to the laughing sky bending down so broth-
 erly,
 Who would not my baby love, fatherly and motherly ?

1880.

SLEEP-SONG.

The stars are nodding asleep,
 My baby,
 Nodding asleep, asleep ;
 The mother moon is bidding them,
 Baby,
 Into their cradles creep.

She's singing the song of the wind,
 My baby,
 Singing the song of the wind,
 And all of her love and her longing,
 Baby
 May in the music find.

She's tucking them into the cloud,
 My baby,
 Tucking them into the cloud,
 And covering them warm with her kisses,
 Baby,
 Kissing her babies so proud.

Then bid the sky-babies good-night,
 My baby,
 Bid the sky-babies good-night ;
 And mother will wake thee with morning,
 Baby,
 Wake thee with morning light.

CRADLE-SONG.

The winds are whispering over the sea,
And the waves are listening smilingly,
They are telling tales of the shining sky,
And the dusky lands they travel by.

They are telling tales they have often told,
Of faces new and feelings old,
Of hope and fear, of love and hate,
Of birth and death and human fate.

Of homes of joy and hearts of pain,
Of storm and strife and peace again,
Of age and youth, of man and maid,
And of baby mine in the cradle laid.

And the sun laughs down in his own kind way,
For the heart of the sun is as young as they ;
And the sea looks up as a loved one should,
They are old, they know it is good, all good.

You may feel the waves as the cradle swings,
And the air is stirred with the wind's soft wings,
And mother has heard from sky and sea
That they send "sweet sleep and dreams" to thee.

Then hush ! my baby, gently rest,
In the night's wide arms, on the earth's broad breast,
The sky above, beneath the sea,
And a greater than all to shelter thee.

SLUMBER-SONG.

Hush ye, ma bairnie, slummer noo,
 The wan mune sheens throu' the lift aboo',
 The blinkin' stars are a' alicht
 A speirin' secrets oot o' the nicht.

The mighty airth is quaiet an' still
 As the winter seal o' a brawlin' rill,
 Save the chirpie shrill an' the nicht-bird's cry
 Tae the skirlin' wind a soughin' by.

Ilk snaw-drap white, ilk hare-bell blue,
 Wull slummer till kissed wi' the airle dew,
 Sae slummer ye saftly, slummer ye lang,
 While mither's a croonin' the lullaby sang.
April 1, 1879.

THE CALL OF GENIUS.

The tides, the tides, with ebb and with flow,
 Follow the moon-maid to and fro,
 All the world over, wherever she go.
 Ah ! heart, proud heart, what say ? shall we go ?
 Follow our mistress to and fro
 All the world over, proud heart, or no ?

1882.

SUMMER-CLOUD.

Ah ! summer-cloud, soft summer-cloud,
 Slow sailing o'er a sea of blue,
 So saintly white, so chastely proud,
 What were the sky deprived of you ?

Where could the eye, a-weary, stay ?
 Or where the lightsome sunshine play ?
 Or where far-wandering breezes stray
 In yon bare sky, wert thou away ?

Where were the thunder and the storm ?
 The red-tongued lightning and the calm ?
 Where were the climes of cold and warm ?
 The season's changing charm ?

Fair phantoms of the upper air,
 Ye fleecy foot-prints of the wind,
 What could we do, wert thou not there ?
 What food for fancy find ?

Where would the shadows hide their head ?—
 These fellows of thy sunshine play ?
 Were their familiar faces dead,
 What wonder were the day ?

Thou fairy-land of every eye,
 Thou home of dreams of every heart,
 'Tis in my soul that thou and I
 Were never meant to part.

Ah ! summer-cloud, soft summer-cloud,
 Slow sailing o'er the far blue sea,
 I'd roll the sky up in thy shroud
 And lay it by with thee.

March, 1882.

“ WHERE IT LISTETH.”

How do I sing ?
 Ask the wind that carols from sky unto sea.
 I sing as it will, what it will,
 This spirit that moveth in me.

How do I sing?
 Ask the wind that carols from sea up to sky.
 As the wind sings, so I sing,
 And shall—wind and I—till we die.

How do I sing?
 As one whose life is his song's single breath
 Must sing, all he feels, and must feel;
 As one to whom dumbness were death.

1883.

THE WINGÈD SEED.

"Some people say you are a poet,
 Come! poem on the silk-weed!
 Why, every roadside round can grow it,
 The common country milk-weed."

"Were I the road, methinks I'd sing
 Swift answer to thy question,
 But, as I am, await the Spring,
 And Summer's soft suggestion.

Suffice that children love it well,
 'Tis true to humble duty,
 Casts o'er the commonplace its spell
 Of old, familiar beauty;

In faith and truth, as best it can,
 Fills out its sphere of living;—
 Read! heed! and there's thy poem, man,
 The common milk-weed's giving."

March 2, 1883.

CRIPPLED.

Poor bird, with the down-drooping wing,
 The shot in thy head, sent to slay,
 Yet once time was thine sweet to sing,
 And meet with thy mate on the spray.

Like thee, I was born to be gay,
 To nestle near nature and sing ;
 Alas ! *I* am blind to the day,
 Like thee, and have broken *my* wing.

March 24, 1883.

MELANCHOLY.

A nest whose builders long had flown
 Hung on a leafless bough,
 By rude, rough-handed breezes blown,
 In wintry weather now.

And so in storm, and so in strife,
 Do our young hopes depart,
 So barren leave the tree of life,
 So bare the broken heart.

Mid music of the summer days,
 Bright breezes, rustling leaves,
 The memory of winter strays,
 Her strains of sorrow weaves.

And from the tropic sun and sea
 Of careless youth, I fear
 I'm straying far, where soon 'twill be
 But winter all the year.

1882.

FORGETFULNESS.

Oh smoothly the soft-sliding river
 Flows on to its rest in the sea,
 No breezes the still waters shiver
 From bank-side or bush, shore or tree.

And feelings as gentle and gliding,
 As smooth and as soft for to see,
 Flow past, outward, never abiding,—
 Alas! past my life! out of me!

1883.

IN SORROW.

No twittering under the eaves,
 No blossoming over the door;
 The trees are stript of their leaves,
 And the sea is at war with the shore.

The snowy nests are swung
 By the wind in the branches bare,
 And where summer's songs were sung
 Is the wail of the winter air.

And my thoughts have flown along
 To the strength of a warmer clime,
 They'll be back with a sweeter song
 When winter is gone—sometime.

March 31, 1882.

RARE MOMENTS.

There come rare moments when we stir
Some life-thought into living,
Some feeling stumble on, as 'twere,
That gifts us beyond giving.

When our dull eyes are opened wide
To life's surrounding glory,
And our deaf ears no longer hide
Love's all-abounding story.

The soul hath pulses swift and strong
To sweep this creeping being
Up in the soaring flight of song
Into immortal seeing.

When we behold ourselves once more
In spotless strength and beauty,
See straight unto the farther shore
The paths of truth and duty.

When in the heart the swelling strength
And bounding hope of nature
Lift man above himself at length,
A God in soul and stature.

When what is done we see, and what
Is missed, what now remaining,
And bend our will to work, sink not
In motionless complaining.

We are again the bright-souled boy
With all the world near neighbor,
We feel again the long-lost joy
Of loving, growing labor.

Hope, faith, and freedom, in one high
 Triumphant song combining,
 Lay bare the secrets of the sky,
 God's providence divining.

The clouds of doubt are torn apart,
 Gone fear with features double,
 And, hushed, we beat in God's deep heart,
 Cleansed, healed from grief and trouble.

How small our crawling cares, how slight
 The selfmade ills before us ;
 They were but noises of the night,
 Light now and life restore us.

We are no more earth's broken slave,
 We reach above our sorrow :
 Joy ! Joy ! God gives, as once he gave,
 Again a cloudless morrow.

Sept., 1882.

DEPARTURE.

I saw her with fingers close shading
 Her eyes from the glare of the sun,
 With waving of apron, and fading
 Slow smiles from her face, one by one.

I saw her again, a day after,
 Watch gull-wing and wave-spray at sea
 With tears, where was smiling and laughter,—
 How soon had the world changed for thee !

I saw her yet, crushing her sorrow
 Deep down in her heart through the years,
 Still hoping her husband to-morrow,
 With smiles again sadder than tears.

I saw her last, happy and breathless,
 The light of her faith on her face,
 Sail over the sea that is deathless,
 Restored to her husband's embrace.

March 20, 1883.

STORM.

A white toss of wave on the cloud-covered ocean,
 A shriek of the wind in the sea-beaten air ;
 The struggle for life of some mighty emotion,
 Soon smoothed into silence, of peace or despair !
 And here on the strand, where the billows are leaping
 Their length up the sea-sand, stands one, sole alone,
 And gone is the storm, with its wailing and weeping,
 And bright is the sky, with its woe overblown.
 But the boom of the billows, and deep ocean dirges,
 Shall hoarser be heard, and the rock-eddies moan,
 Yet longer the roar of the on-coming surges,
 And somewhere—be sure—a new tempest has grown.

March 21, 1883.

MEDITATION.

I lay in my boat on the motionless ocean,
 No cloud in the sky and all calm on the sea,
 And the spirit of peace in that soul of commotion
 Love's grand Benedicité whispered to me.

Till the spaciousness lost me the world and its feeling,
 Life's littleness melted like mist from my mind,
 And the stillness grew speech, and the distance, revealing,
 Showed God in his greatness divinely outlined.
 'Tis trouble and toil in the world without ceasing,
 Unrest and outreach in the mind of a man,
 But freedom and peace of the spirit releasing
 Its life from its labor—this God only can.

March 18, 1883.

SUMMER.

To float between the sea and sky
 At lazy ease ;
 To listen to the curlew's cry
 Or peep, or plover whistling by
 Upon the breeze,
 And hear the dreamy lullaby
 That broods upon the seas.
 To see the cloud-caught breezes blow
 The heavens o'er,
 To hear the ripples' murmurous flow,
 The pine-tree's odorous music, low
 Along the shore ;
 To think these things will all be so
 When we are now no more.
 To breathe beneath the slumbrous noon
 On ocean's breast ;
 To hear the distant-laughing loon,
 Or watch, with half-shut eyes, the moon
 Steal toward the west ;
 To think we too, as softly, soon
 Shall be—at last—at rest.

To hear the many-throated cry
 That shakes the sea ;
 To feel the wastes of wave and sky
 Encircle me ;
 To think that, cradled so, we lie
 In life's eternity.

So safe upon the sea to ride,
 And feel no fear ;
 To turn amid the twisting tide,
 Or, still, on wings of wind to glide
 Through calm so clear ;
 To feel Thy presence at my side,
 Thou who art ever near :

What wonder that I love the sea,
 And love the sky !
 What wonder that I love to be
 Where all the world is full of Thee,
 Thy bosom nigh ;
 And see the clouds of sorrow flee
 Beneath Thy kindly eye !

Ah ! God, though I may wander far,
 At close of day
 Send some new sign of where you are,
 Send forth some bright and beckoning star
 To lead the way ;
 And leave the gates of life ajar,
 And show a saving ray.

BY THE SEA.

Far isle in the wide-beating waters of ocean,
The smile of the sky on thy girdle of foam,
Above and around thee is change and commotion,
Yet in thee the birds of the sea find a home.

Grey gull with the wind on thy still-sailing pinions,
So careless and free in thy down-looking flight,
Thy home thus enthroned in the ocean's dominions,
Thy life, are upheld in the hand of God's might.

This solitude seeming, this peace-giving quiet,
Is never the work of the world or of men,
The strength and the love of the Lord uphold it,
The chorus of ocean intones His Amen.

March 16-18, 1883.

How wild are the weather-worn rocks where are sun-
ning

The gulls and the terns on the breaker-beat shore,
But wilder the far-reaching reefs underrunning
The tide where the billows come curling ashore.

But mild is the smile of the sky brightly beaming,
And healthful the smell of the salt of the sea,
But the distance, the silence, the solitude, teeming
With life and with liberty, dearer to me.

Old ocean, my soul on the roll of thy billows
Is borne up and on with the strength of its youth,
Thy wisdom of age my world-weariness pillows,
Thy distant distinctness creates me to truth.

There is love in thy grasp, there is life in thy giving,
 Strength lies in thy hand, and peace smiles from thy
 heart,
 Breadth and depth are thy thought, and the pleasure
 of living
 Knows none like to being wherever thou art.

March 16-18, 1883.

The blue beyond blue of the high-hollowed heavens,
 The sky full of stars on the wide-shining sea,
 The gleam of the moon on the dim-heaving ocean,
 The bare-bosomed billow, bring healing to me.

They whisper of peace underlying all living,
 They whisper life's fever is weakness at best,
 There are seasons of working and seasons of weeping,
 But always, in Nature, a season of rest.

A season when deep answers deep, world-repeating .
 Of love—which is life, and of death—which is peace ;
 Unveiled, and revealing the long-rolling billows
 Of earth reaching on to their rest and release.

I trust in the wisdom creating, sustaining,
 I share the serenity, freedom, and strength,
 They promise me peace, praise, contentment in living,
 For past as for present, for future at length.

Turn, turn from the world with its whirl and its mur-
 mur,
 Take time to be free and to live and to see,
 Throw open thy soul to the worship of Nature,
 And sing, in its symbol, with sky and with sea.

Till thy channels of life, with new joy overflowing,
 Earth's ruggedness round in their comforting flood,
 Lift life from the level in reach of the breezes,
 Love's ichor immortal, God's wine, in the blood.

March 18, 1883.

GULL ISLAND.

A tuft of green surmounts the heaving sea,
 Crowning a crannied cliff whose threatening base
 Spurns the uprearing billows in their race,
 Scatters in foam their swollen jealousy.
 Slow-waving kelp beckons maliciously
 As surges scale the shell-encrusted rock,
 While in the teeming air the white winged flock—
 Tinted with pearl, the ocean's livery—
 Circles the isle with living aureole ;
 And here and there a bird is on its nest,
 Lulled into slumber by the ocean's roll,
 Or pluming daintily its snowy breast ;
 While, far away, swift to their island goal
 The fisher-bands speed homeward from their quest.

The sunset floods the sky with golden light,
 The fleecy clouds flush crimson at the sight,
 Swift-veiling darkness marks the close of day,
 The last sea-rovers wing their lonely way
 Unto the lodestone of their tireless flight,
 And silence rules supreme the slumb'ring night.

1879.

AUTUMN.

The woodland, aflame with frosty fire,
 Yellowed with gold,
 Mellowed with gold,
Tremulous in each leafy spire,
Sways to the lay of the breeze-blown lyre ;
 Beaming fire white,
 Gleaming fire white,
As ruddy flush and glow of green
Are molten in one dazzling sheen.

Stray leaflets dot the winnowing breeze,
 Flocking to rest,
 Rocking to rest,
'Tis the glory of death illumines the trees,
And the burdened air is hushed, as these
 Utter farewell,
 Flutter farewell ;—
An autumn sunset, tingeing bright
The frown that bodes the winter night.

Now, outstretched fingers gaunt and bare
 Shiver with cold,
 Quiver with cold,
And grope for their leaves in the sobbing air
As each lost leaf were a grief to bear,
 Drearily moan,
 Wearily moan ;
The icy blast scuds shivering past,
The gloom of winter is come at last.

October, 1879.

LOVE.

A bee broke into a flower bell,
 A burly burglar bee,
 And pilfered sweets from the honeyed cell
 Air-cradled breezily.
 Sweeter yet the fragrance grew,
 Brighter yet each varied hue.
 What can loss with gain imbue?

Love.

A tear fell on to the pall of night,
 Just at the birth of day,
 But gleamed a gem as glazed it bright
 The dew-destroying ray.
 Fiercer flamed the scornful sun,
 Brighter beamed the doomed one.
 What can love till life is done?

Love.

A lute whose music sobbed and fled
 Aneath death's rustling wings,
 Woke with the soul of a song long dead
 As memory swept the strings.
 Mournful the unwonted strain
 Echoed by the lute again.
 What can pleasure make of pain?

Love.

Hast thou Faith that naught may daunt?
 Trust that turns the lie?
 In thy soul have chosen haunt
 Hope and Charity?
 Canst thou cherish through a wrong
 Though it pain thee life time long?
 Then 's the burthen of thy song,

Love.

Nov., 1879.

DEAD.

Dead ? Dead ? say they ? My darling dead ?

No ! No !

Dead on her bridal bed,
Her wedding robe the winding sheet,
My wife, new wed,
So still, so sweet,
Is dead ?

No ! No !

Fools not to see !

She dreams of me, she smiles on me.
Wreath some roses in her hair,—
Sleeping, dreaming, smiling there,—
For love's sweet sake ;
Lay a lily down to rest,
Pure as peace, upon her breast ;
Place some pansies by her side
For sweet thoughts when she awake
To life again, for love's sweet sake,
My willing, wishing, darling bride.
Leave her to her dreams, and me !
Ye stone blind, who *will* not see,
Get ye gone !—alone ! and now
One long kiss upon her brow,
Softly, lovingly imprest,
Lest it rob her of her rest.

ROSE LEAVES.

Once a rose breathed in those,
 With blush of flame and sparkling eye,
 Yet none the less that rose must die.
 Prythee ! do not ask me why !
 Each dull, dead leaf, so wan and dry,
 Is a living grief for such as I :
 Yet you *may* spy, if you try,
 Subtle fragrance lingering still,
 So, I cannot tell you why,
 My love lingers and ever will.

1880.

A MISTY MORNING.

Coquettish Nature veils her face
 In cloudiness of misty grace,
 Yet, coyly vain, her charms enhances
 By half revealing that entrances,
 Until the sense-soul pants to see
 This beauty-blending unity.
 Then witchery dissolves the spell,
 And loveliness no tongue can tell,
 With dewy freshness fraught, appears
 To smile new magic through her tears.

1879.

EXPECTANCY.

The robin-reds on the branches brown,
 Mid tender budding of tiny leaves,
 Are swaying lazily up and down ;
 The swallows are building beneath the eaves.
 All nature is waiting the coming spring
 To burst into singing and blossoming.

1882.

“SONGS WITHOUT WORDS.”

Weave words of sound and color into rhyme,
Beat thought and feeling out in tune and time,
This most may do. Is this the art sublime?

I knew a poet once, could feel so fine
The sense of nature, read the inward sign
And symbol, life held harmony divine.

No word he spake, his actions all could teach :
A poet of life, as they the poets of speech.

1882.

NIGHT.

What a hush is in the heart of the night,
What a warmth in her womanly breast,
With what a tender, motherly right
She summons us all to rest.

Yes, you I love as a mother too,
Your face never weary to see,
For I feel that calm and strength with you
I felt as a child at her knee.

1882.

THE HUSBANDMAN.

Out in the garden the gardener goes,
With spectacle-bow bent over his nose,
And snips with his shears a long-stemmed rose,
And the fairest flowers the garden grows.

And I, poor fool, I can't tell why !
 The trembling tears swept into my eye,
 And I thought, as I turned away with a sigh,
 So death dooms the best of us all to die.

1882.

FATE.

A face of a summer ago,
 Of a maid I met by the sea,
 Haunts me wherever I go
 And is always looking at me
 With a curious constancy.

And whether I will it or no
 I can not get rid of her gaze,
 Standing and looking so,
 With her modest and maidenly ways,
 And I would not the rest of my days.

1882.

"THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN."

The moon looks alone in the night
 Through the tremulous lines of the stars,
 Yet shines by the sun's hidden light
 Dull earth to our darkness debars.

So would I wish my friends, were I gone,
 To live in the light of my love,
 When earth's shadows are darkest smile on
 From their height in the heavens above.

March, 1883.

WISHES.

" If sun and moon only could meet,"

Said dreamer, the four year old,

" Now wouldn't it, papa, be sweet?"

My jewel of ruddiest gold.

" Just see one another and know—

It must be so lonely up there."

Ah! child, could *we* meet, see, and know,

Own child, with thy mother's fair hair.

March 24, 1883.

A SYMBOL.

" Well, what are you staring at there?

Now what in the world have you found?

Why, where are your wits? I declare!

A shadow, thrown over the ground."

Yes, shadow of branch in the sun :

I thought—it *was* strange, I confess—

So stands to-day many a one

In the light of his life's success.

March 25, 1883.

IN THE DARK.

Out in the silent night

The earth no eye can see,

But a few faint stars alight

Are beckoning distantly.

So we, from day to day,
 Stumble on—oftimes o'erthrown—
 Through the dark, by the feeble ray
 Of a few faint hopes alone.

March, 1882.

THOUGH FAR, YET NEARER.

Could reach of time and distance
 Betwixt us barrier be,
 We never should be nearer
 Than thou art now to me.

But heart tells true, believe me,
 Till thou hadst crossed the sea,
 I never knew how needful,
 How near thou wert to me,

May 2, 1883.

HYMN.

O God, thine altar is the truth
 Whereon we daily stand ;
 Thy sacrifice the noble life ;
 Thy staff the helping hand ;
 Thy priests the people, one and all,
 Who hear the word from Thee ;
 Thy script the heart's hid character,
 Engraved eternally.

Oh, bid in us love's fires shine,
 Joys, woes, smite, blow on blow,
 Till we be welded firm to truth,
 And duty's textures glow ;
 And never more may faithless prove,
 But, of each moment's strife,
 Build up the anthem : " Praise His Name,"
 God's temple in man's life.

1886.

HYMN.

*Written for the Ordination Service of Rev. Edward Hale,
 Oct. 14th. 1886.*

The temple of Thy truth, O God,
 Forever steadfast stands,
 A present life divine upborne
 In human hearts and hands.

Creation the foundation laid,
 Christ is the corner-stone,
 The ages of their treasures gave
 To build about Thy throne.

May we, O God, whose turn it is
 To wait on Thee to-day,
 As pure and polished stones be built
 Within Thy walls, we pray.

And he who at the altar stands,
 Thy servant, may he be
 A living sacrifice of love
 Acceptable to Thee.

To him a glory and a strength,
 To us a constant sign
 That Thou our Father art, and we
 True children, Lord, of Thine.

And as with thankfulness and praise
 We through these portals throng,
 And lift on high the voice of prayer
 And glad, triumphal song,

O pour upon our spirits, Lord,
 The blessing of Thy grace,
 Until, the temple veil withdrawn,
 We see Thee face to face.

EASTER HYMN.

As, when the snow still on the bough is clinging,
 And winter will not yet let go her hold,
 Sudden we hear a bird returning singing,
 And spring is come to chase away the cold:

As, when—the clouds beneath the sun departing—
 The million voices of the sod arise,
 Into love's semblance and life's stature starting,
 And lift their anthems to the bending skies:

So may we, Father, through this time of waiting,
 Our spirits for Thy coming have prepared
 That every aim unto our life relating
 Shall find fruition in Thy will declared.

Lift us and light us on our way, that, casting
 Each burden, doubt, and fear, before thy feet,
 We may go on in progress everlasting
 Into communion perfect and complete.

And then, what though the winter's pall be o'er us,
 What though the icy touch of death be near,
 The gate of life lies open there before us,
 And thou, O God, in all Thy love art here.

Sing Hail and Hallelujah and Hosanna,
 With wind and stream and tree and mountain sing,
 Lift up, strong hearts, life's yet unlowered banner,
 We come, we conquer, in Thy name, O King.

March, 1888.

CLASS SONG—Harvard, 1881.

Classmates, 'tis the farewell greeting
 Harvard gives her children here,
 While each moment's quick heart-beating
 Wakens memories we revere :
 Through this sweet and solemn hour
 Echoes of old victories run
 Till they swell with mighty power
 Cheer on cheer for Eighty-one.

Classmates, while our hearts are thrilling,
 Strike hands ere we bid good-bye !
 Show the world that we are willing
 To be classmates till we die.
 Prove throughout life's stern endeavor
 Every man a worthy son ;
 Foremost in the vanguard ever
 Bear our banner, Eighty-one.

Classmates, there'll be missing faces
From the roll-call year by year :

We who labor in the traces
Must do double duty here ;
Fill the yet unwritten pages
With deeds noblest to be done,
Till men praise through after ages
Eighty-One, our Eighty-One.

June 1881.

SIMULATIONS.

We went everywhere together,
She and I ;
Thought the world of one another,
By the bye ;
Yet I doubt, devoutly, whether,
All the times we were together,
Ever I so much as kissed her
On the sly.
This a brother
Spares a sister,
Reason why !

He was turned of two and twenty,
Quite a man !
She a brune, with azure eyes,
(Azure like it, that implies !)
Of a pattern not so plenty,
Irish plan.

And he took her to the theatre,
 Every night some place or other ;
 Yet somehow did not appear to
 Find much footing to adhere to ;
 Plainly she preferred another
 Older hand.
 Very well, when one's her brother !
 Understand ?

1882.

AFFINITY, A. D. 2,000.

A man imagined a maid,
 A maid imagined a man,
 (Ideal of course);—she sighed and prayed,
 He willed as a well man can.

And she kept thinking of him,
 And he kept thinking of her,
 Till time and space did spin and swim,
 They met and married were.

May, 1883.

A DEFENCE.

No wish have I to marry,
 Nor any scorn for the sex ;
 Their praises I could not carry,
 Nor aught that their heart would vex.

No ! No ! the rhyme and the reason
 Is they are too good for me !
 But should I—'twere no treason,
 Let's wait awhile, and see.

1882.

ST. VALENTINE.

Hast thou a thought of me, of me,
 My valentine, my valentine?
 I've most too many thoughts of thee,
 My lady valentine.
 It is not well to think too long,
 If heart should tell, would heart be wrong?
 Ah! would the spell were in my song,
 My valentine, my valentine.

Yet thought the less mine may not be,
 My valentine, my valentine,
 Make thought the more by thine—by thee,
 My lady valentine.
 Love likes not well to live apart,
 If love could tell, life touch thy heart,
 Ah! what a spell were in my art,
 My valentine, my valentine.

Feb'y 11, 1883.

A BIT OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ADVICE.

St. Valentine's day! and 'tis time I should send
 Some solid, substantial gift fit for a friend,
 At suits with the season. Each day's said to bring
 Its blessing, why's winter behind in this thing?
 Though snow heap the field, and though cloud hide
 the sky,
 The flowers will blow, the sun shine, by and by ;
 So when love looks most desert, and life looks most
 dear,
 Remember the springtime, the turn of the year !

Be always the slowest in bringing to bud
 Past seed of sure promise ; bit, bridle your blood ;
 Pin faith to this single and simplest short rule :
 However the heat, do you always keep cool !

Take your time! Let the world jog along as it will,
 You'll wait for it yet at the top of the hill !
 Do, what you do, well ; though it be but to blast,
 Like the winter, you'll bloom with the springtime at
 last.

Throw off all appearance, *be* always the best,
 And trust to slow justice, time's truth for the rest ;
 So, when others are wailing that winter is here,
 You'll just be beginning your blessed New Year.

Feb'y 11, 1883.

RONDEL.

Off with ye all ! away ! away !
 Fell mosquito, and fearful flea,
 Singing and stinging and bringing to bay,
 You worry the life right out of me.

Out of my sight and sound, I say !
 You're altogether a deal too free.
 Off with ye all ! away ! away !
 Fell mosquito, and fearful flea.

Ah ! well, you are settling down to stay
 At ease, at my expense, I see ;
 These lodgings are not to let to-day,
 Pack your traps and let—me be !

Off with ye all ! away ! away !
 Fell mosquito, and fearful flea.

1882.

TRIOLETS.

Though he not always the best has done,
 He always has done the best he can ;
 Then is he worthy as any one,
 Though he not always the best has done.
 For who can do better under the sun,
 Say more than is said by this poor man ?
 Though he not always the best has done,
 He always *has* done the best he can.

1882.

To M. A. W.

'Tis a silly, simple song,
 Yet it meaneth much to me ;
 Remember, as you read along,
 'Tis a silly, simple song,
 Yet my greeting gives to thee,
 Full of friendship, so you see,
 'Tis a silly, simple song,
 Yet it meaneth much—to *me*.

1882.

“CONFESSIOAL.”

“Hello, Joe !”

Well, well, old fellow !

Where in—Bedlam—have you been ?
 Cliquot ? widow, plump and mellow ?—
 Sit !—Liqueur ? Chartreuse ?—and spin.

“Missed me, eh, you rogue ? Sick-listed !
 Calls, balls, sermons, all sworn off !
 Slight !—all right !—a trifle twisted ;
 Chills and fever—h'm—and cough.

No, no, *no* ! now hold ! don't *you* go"—
 Well, I won't, old fel, sit down !
 " I'll tell *you*, although you know, Joe,
 'Tis a secret to the town.

Met a party at a party,—
 Palpitation of the heart !
 I was never very hearty
 In the pericardiac part.

Couldn't manage to forget her ;
 Stuck like Sinbad's pick-a-back !
 Out at every rout I met her,
 So I tried the other tack,

Fell in tow, gave fans and flowers,
 Bibles, books—the tin and tone !
 She and I, we spun the hours
 As you spin a cherry stone.

'Twas at Mrs. Mac MacCarthy's
 Musicale I met my " mash " .
 Last, though—ah ! these nasty parties,
 How they *do* rake out the cash !

Held her, charming, in the corner
 With my wild, and glittering eye,
 Like the Marinere, or Horner
 With his piece of mock-mince pie.

Oh, you should have seen her, Joe boy,
 With her cheeks of apple-bloom,
 While the viol and the haut-boy
 Squeaked their liveliest in the room.

“ Paregorically ” speaking,
 Slump went I upon my knees !
 She was one that (k) needed seeking,
 Couldn’t take your ease and please.

Mild was she as—any bandit,
 And her eyes’ surprise so sweet ;
 And I—Joe, I couldn’t stand it !—
 Laid my life down at her feet.

When a jocular old mummy
 Got his ocular in focus ;
 ’Twas the husband ! I’d been dummy
 To his partner ! the old hocus !

So, Joe, that was my last party ;
Chills and fever, that I found !
 Let’s be thankful, yet, my hearty,
 That my *coughin’s* above ground.”

March 13, 1883.

CONNORS, THE DOG-MAN OF HARVARD.

*A privileged character for years about the Grounds, free of the
 rooms.*

Connors’s dorgs I sings
 As ’e to ’arvard brings,
 Brings ivery year ;
 Loikewise the auld white ’at,
 W’ich on ’is locks ’as sat
 Sence ’e cum ’ere.

An’ thin the woorn out vist,
 Thet, buttoned round ’is chist,
 Makes fur thim purps a nist,
 “—— — foine purps, the bist !”

Nixt fur the shirtless spot
 Wheeron they divils throt ;
 Thin moind thim pants wot strews
 Garbage upon thim shoes,
 An', tho' it maint be news,
 Hark ye ter Connors' *mews*.

" Ye haint got nary cint ?
 —, I can't pay me rint !
 What's moor I can't begin't,
 These is 'ard toimes ;
 Yis, sor, toimes was I sells
 Allers ter stoodint fels,
 Thim was the 'arvard swells,
 Thim dorgs was primes.

Tarriers, bull-purps, an' pugs,
 Now's only fit fur bugs,
 Dorg-skins fur fancy rugs,
 Thet's how it is ;
 Dorgs, sor, ain't wuth a çuss,
 Things is an orful muss,
 An' now, ter make it wuss,
 Taxes 'as riz.

This dorg yer wants ter see ?
 Cute, sor, as 'e can be,
 Knows now, sor, more than me,
 Thet creetur there.
 He kinder takes ter you ?
 He do, by —, he do !
 Yis, sor, thet purp's true blue,
 Bull ivery hair.

Jist see the divil leap !—
 Don't want ter buy now cheap ?
 'Bout dorgs you knows a heap,
 I'll sell yer low !
 Eh ? yer wont come ter scratch ?
 Weel, 'av yer got a match ?
 Nixt toime I git a batch
 I'll let yer know."

Harvard College, Nov., 1879.

MA LASS.

There's a lassie somewhere i' the warl' loes me
 Whom I loe wi' the hail o' ma hert,
 Micht she gie but ae blink o' her bonny blue e'e,
 An' we wadna, I'se warrant ye, pairt :
 Ma lass i' the wide, wide warl' somewhere,
 Ma lassie as loes only me,
 O gin an' I live I'll fin' her there
 A bidin' sae patien'ly,
 'Ma lassie, a bidin' o' me.

Just where is her nainsel I dinna weel ken,
 Nae mair does ma lassie ken me,
 I wadna stan' clackin' sae like an auld hen,
 Micht I wi' ma ain lassie be :

She comes na, I maun loe the thocht o' her mair,
 An' sae fashion mysel, d' ye see,
 As ma lass be na shamed o' her bargain sae sair
 Wi' a puir guid-fo'-naethin' like me :

O hae she a hantle o' siller enow
 I care na, sae hae I ma bride ;
 Come tocherless save the bricht blink o' yer brow,
 An' e'en poortith I'll marry wi' pride :

But come ! bide na frae me awa', lass, sae lang,
 Or I maun up an' after ye gae,
 For wi' luv's lane to wrestle I am na sae strang,
 A gey fule maks he o'me the day :

Thin busk ye, ma burdie, rin, dinna ye stay,
 But hie hame yer auld jo for to see,
 I'll e'en tak it upon ma ain shouthers to say
 Ye'll na mourn o' yer marryin' me :
 Ma lass, i' the wide, wide warl' somewhere,
 Ma lassie as loes ounly me,
 O gin an' I live I'll fin' her there
 A bidin' sae patien'ly,
 Ma lassie, a bidin' o' me.

1882.

LOVE'S DIALOGUE.

“ Eh ! Nannie, noo ! Nannie, an' will ye no tarry ? ”

“ Nae, Sannie, I'm ower young yet for to marry.”

“ Nae, Nannie, ain Nannie, ye loe ye'll na leave me.”

“ Nae, Sannie, loe ye, an' ye wadna sae deave me.”

“ Thin, Nannie, fause Nannie, nae hert hae ye in ye.”

“ Thin, Sannie, why claver ? nane hae I to gin ye.”

“ Hoot ! Nannie, ma Nannie, hae sum'at compassion.”

“ Nae, Sannie, I canna, 'tis oot o' the fashion.”

"Weel, gin an' ye winna ye need na, ma hizzie
Sair gars me sae lang wi' yer like to ben busy.

For where ye'll na pity, fu' mony will loe."

"Thin, Sannie, daft Sannie, why dinna ye go?"

"Nae, Nannie, the reason's na sae far away."

"Gae fin' it, an' bring it back wi' ye the day."

"Hech! Nannie, the reason's yersel, an' I say,"

"Thin tak me, ye gawkie, what mair would ye hae?"

An' bear it i' min', lad, next time ye come courtin'
Spak up like a man an' ye'll never lack fortune.

1882.

FORCING HIS HAND.

"Hech! laddie, why are ye aye hingin' aroun',
Aye hingin' aroun' me sae steddly?
See ye onythin' wrang wi' the cut o' ma gown?
Or fin' ye a fau't wi' the ledly!"

"Nae! lassie, I canna help hingin' about,
Nae mair can I say why unto ye.
Nae, frowna! I canna, I maunna, let out,—
Wae's me, ma ain lassie, I loe ye!"

"Hoot! laddie, there's naethin' sae sinfu' i' that
Ye maunna it tell to a ledly;
I wadna ben frichted by puttin' it pat,
Lang hae I loed you, lad, already."

1882.

THE MAIDEN'S NAY.

" I maunna, I maunna, ma minnie says nay,
 I canna gae wi' ye, ma laddie !
 Ma feyther ha cursit me deid o' the day
 I gang wi' ye unner yer plaidie."

" Hoot ! hizzie, the hail o' yer household an' all
 I hae na the hert for to marry,
 Yer lane will I tak, they may e'en tak the wall,
 Foul fall them an' we twa miscarry."

" Ay, laddie, ain laddie, 'tis e'en as ye say,
 Ye jalouse vera richt an' I grant ye,
 But I'll nae be sae fou to gang wi' ye the day,
 'Twere tae muckle for sic a bit jauntie.

But gin ye will win me an' wear me, ma lad,
 I wad ax but ae bit o' a favor,
 Come, call o' the auld folk an' speir o' ma dad
 Till he yiel', as hae I, to yer claver."

1882.

 QUESTION.

Ha ! lad, hae ye never been smit wi' a face ?
 Hae ye never noo, lad, hae ye never ?
 Hae ye never set foot i' the rantin' race
 That aye rins on forever ?
 Ha ! lad ?
 Hae ye never ? Hae ye never ?

Ha ! lad, hae ye never been caught wi' an eye ?

Hae ye never noo, lad, hae ye never ?

Aw ! own up mon, be na sae sly !

Ye've done yer best endeavor,

Ha ! lad ?

Hae ye never ! Hae ye never ?

Ha ! lad, hae ye never been doon o' yer knees ?

Hae ye never noo, lad, hae ye never ?

Nae gin a sonsie quean a squeeze ?

Ye'll do't gin ye perséver—

Ha ! lad ?

Hae ye never ? Hae ye never ?

Ha ! lad, hae ye never rin daft o' a lass ?

Hae ye never noo, lad, hae ye never ?

Ne'er keekit i' love's lookin' glass

An ass aye mair forever,

Ha ! lad ?

Hae ye never ? Hae ye never ?

Ha ! lad, hae ye never been flesh an' bluid ?

Hae ye never noo, lad, hae ye never ?

Hoots toots ! ye maun be made o' mud !

Ye'll na stay sae forever,

Ha ! lad ?

Hae ye never ? Hae ye *never* ?

ANSWER.

Nae ! mon, ye kenna a' the warl',

Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it !

Not ane, 'tis mony the lass, auld carl,

I've loed at mony a jinkit,

Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it.

Nae ! mon, I letna feelin's oot,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it !
 I've cast a fashous eye aboot,
 As bricht as iver blinkit,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit though ye think it.

Nae ! mon, 'tis there, the look's in me,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it !
 Gang ax the lasses, a' agree
 Their like was niver winkit,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it.

Nae ! mon, sae young I amna yet,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it !
 Yersel' sae auld, we wadna sweat
 Wi' a lass to our elbuck linkit,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it.

Nae ! mon, ye're not yersel that lane,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it !
 Love's a physic guid for iv'ry pain
 An' a mony guid folk drink it,
 Deil a bit, deil a bit, though ye think it.

“ FAUSE, FAUSE.”

Fause, fause is the hert o' the warl', I fear,
 An' sick am I o' her sorrow,
 'Twere scarce worth while, the livin' here,
 Were 't na for the fair to-morrow :
 But we maunna mope,
 For we live in hope
 Alway o' a bricht to-morrow.

Fause, fause is the hert o' the warl', I fear,
 A cauld, cauld hert an' a hollow,
 But life to the likes o' us is sae dear
 We'll e'en her shadow follow :

Fause, fause is the hert o' the warl', I fear,
 But wha would trouble borrow?
 I'll e'en smile on though it tak' the tear
 To stifle a' ma sorrow :

Fause, fause is the hert o' the warl', I fear,
 But fauser surrender to sorrow !
 Nae richt hae I wi' sic grievous gear,
 Let the day laugh it oot for the morrow :
 For we maunna mope,
 For we live in hope
 Alway o' a bricht to-morrow.

1882.

" THE WARL' HA A RHYME."

The warl' ha a rhyme, an' we read aricht,
 A rigadoon sae jauntie,
 Micht we but ken by ony sleicht,
 Wow! wadna we be vauntie :

But the chiel wha *gaes* to fin' it oot
 Gaes lang an' need na hurry,
 For a fashous gate it is aboot
 Where bides nae spec o' wurry,
 An' nane win there till free frae care,
 An' 'twill na be i' a hurry.

The warl' ha a rhyme an' we read aricht,
 A gey tune an' a merry,
 Nae need o' specs an' second sight,
 Nae need o' pop an' sherry :

The warl' ha a rhyme an' we read aricht,
 We canna, mair's the pity ;
 We maun try though, wi' a' our micht,
 To con the lightsome ditty :

The warl' ha a rhyme, an' we read aricht,
 A versie fu' o' beauty ;
 Ye hae at hert the lan' o' licht,
 Hark whiles, an' do yer duty !

But the chiel wha *gaes* to fin' it oot
 Gaes lang an' need na hurry,
 For a fashous gate it is aboot
 Where bides nae spec' o' wurry,

An' nane win there till *free frae care*,
 An' 'twill na be i' a hurry.

1882.

SONG.

“ Noo, laddie, winna bide a bit,
 Bide a bit, bide a bit ?
 Noo, laddie, winna bide a bit,
 Nor gae sae fast away ?”

“ Nae, lassie, maunna bide a bit,
 Bide a bit, bide a bit,
 Nae, lassie, maunna bide a bit,
 The deil a bit I may.”

"Thin, lad, e'en tak me wi' yer too,
 Wi' yer too, wi' yer too,
 Thin lad, e'en tak me wi' yer too,
 I carena where ye gae."

"Weel, lass, I maun gae wi' yer too,
 Wi' yer too, wi' yer too,
 Weel, lass, I maun gae wi' yer too,
 Gien an' ye gang my way."

"Thin, lad,"—"thin, lass,"—"let's jog along,
 Jog along, jog along,"
 "Thin, lad,"—"thin, lass,"—"let's jog along,
 O' a' the warl' the tway."

"Fri'nd, fin'a lass an' jog along,
 Jog along, jog along,
 Fri'nd, fin'a lass an' jog along,
 'Tis luck to ye the day."

1882.

A TOI.

A song to give thee greeting,
 Ma belle amie,
 To tell thee, little sweeting,
 Petite jolie,
 How life and love are fleeting,
 Amour et vie,
 Tous deux, s'enfuient.

Thine anger then abating,
 Belle sorcière,
 Leave love not long awaiting,
 Chérie, ma chère,
 But take the precious freighting,
 Je puis me taire,
 Si nécessaire.

1882.

L' ESPÉRANCE.

L' été d'amour,
 A eu son tour,
 Et maintenant, dedans mon coeur,
 Il fait froid, et grand douleur
 Est cachée là, tout tressaillant.
 Ah ! c'est l'hiver amer, je pense,
 Mais le printemps et l'espérance
 Battent à mon coeur,
 S'approchent tous deux,
 Vite nous aurons
 Les fleurs et les chansons.

1882.

TABLE D'HOTE.

Mouche, drôle mouche,
 Ouvrez la bouche,
 Petit gourmet.
 Venez ! venez !
 Je vous appelle de mes amies,
 Approchez donc, soyez tranquille,
 Chez moi souper.

Mouche, bête mouche,
 Fermez la bouche,
 Gras, gros gourmet.
 Tenez ! Tenez !
 Eh ! bien, que nous êtes avide,
 Ton estomac à l'air fort vide,
 Ingrate, allez !

1882.

L'INCONNUE.

Fille de joie,
 Belle fille dé joie,
 Quelle pitié !
 Quelle destinée
 A toi, ma foi,
 Triste fille de joie !
 Seule dans la vie,
 Morte sans amie,
 Des hommes la proie,
 La proie de bêtes !
 Mais n'ayez peur,
 Encore vous êtes
 Enfant de Dieu,
 Pas inconnue
 Pauvre perdue,
 Pauvre perdue.

1882.

L'AMOUR.

Je rêve, je rêve, de ma maîtresse,
 Elle qui bénit, elle qui blesse,
 Maîtresse traîtresse,
 De ma traîtresse.

Je rêve, je rêve
 De ses grands yeux,
 Couleur des cieux ;
 Ses blonds cheveux ;
 Sa jolie moue
 D'amour, d'humeur ;
 L'esprit railleur ;
 Eh ! bien, je l'avoue,
 Je suis encore ravi

De lui,
 De ma traîtresse !
 Toute sa personne
 Si belle, si bonne ;
 Son teint de rose ;
 Chaque autre chose
 De ma maîtresse
 Traîtresse.

Elle d'un élan d'amour si grand,
 De tout mon coeur maîtresse au fond,
 Traîtresse, en bénissante, qui blesse,
 Maîtresse,
 Déesse,
 Traîtresse.

L'âme de démon
 En corps d'un ange !
 Point de raison,
 Mais tout mensonge !
 Hein ! ma faiblesse,
 Je l'aime toujours,
 Lui, ma maîtresse traîtresse,
 Encore m'amour.

CHANSON À BOIRE.

Bons amis, bons compagnons,
 Nous ensemble ennuyons ;
 Vivre ivres, c' est le mot,
 Deviendrons aussitôt
 Bons vivants,
 Bons compagnons.

Bons amis, bons compagnons,
 Rejoissons nous maintenant :
 Les verres remplis jusqu 'au bord,
 La mort après, la vie d 'abord !
 Amusons donc,
 Bons compagnons.

Bons amis, bons compagnons,
 Bourdonnons de belles chansons:
 Santé à nos chères maîtresses !
 Bonté à l'humaine espèce !
 Allons ! Vivons !
 Bons compagnons.

1882.

LIEBE UND LEBEN.

O Liebe nur ist Leben !
 Zu heben und zu beben,
 O Wonn', O Weh' !

Ach ! Leben ist nur Liebe !
 Ist immer diese trübe,
 Ist jenes je.

LOVE AND LIFE.

O love alone is life !
 To lift and thrill,
 O bliss, O woe.

Ah ! Life is only love!
 Is this one ill,
 That other's so.

1882.

TRANSLATIONS.

WANDERER'S NIGHT-SONG.

FROM GOETHE.

Over all the hill-tops
Is rest,
In all the tree-tops
Stirs, at best,
Scarcely a breath,
The birds in the woodland are still too ;
Wait awhile, till you
Rest soon—in death. 1882.

FROM HEINE.

A pine stands lone in the North
And sleeps mid the cold and chill,
The ice and the snow come forth
And cover him o'er at will.

Of a sad, still palm he dreams
That, far in the burning sands,
Mourns for the silent streams
And the hush of the Northern lands. 1881.

Heart, my heart, be free from trouble;
And bear up beneath thy fate ;
What the winter took in hate,
Spring, in love, shall yield thee double.

And how much is yet remaining,
And the world, how lovely still !
Heart, my heart, love to thy fill
All the world, and cease complaining. 1881.

The letter which you wrote me
 Disturbs me not a whit ;
 You'll love no more, you tell me,
 But there's too much of it.

Twelve pages, fine, and neatly,
 A little manuscript ;
 One writes not so completely
 When love's true knot is slipped.

1881.

BELSHAZZAR.

FROM HEINE.

The noon of night wore slowly on,
 And dumb with sleep lay Babylon,
 Save where, within his palace halls,
 Belshazzar's banquet shook the walls,
 And flaming torch threw dimly out
 Pale specters o'er the courtier rout.
 The lordlings sat in a glittering line,
 And tossed off their bumpers of sparkling wine,
 And the clank of the tankard, and shout of the guest,
 Were welcome sounds to the grim king's breast.
 Belshazzar's sallow cheek grew red,
 The wine went whirling through his head,
 And phrensy hurries him headlong,
 And he blasphemes the Godhead with fearful wrong;
 Deep roll his oaths, his boasts ring loud,
 While plaudits shake the servile crowd.

Outspake he, then, with eye of pride ;
Off sped the slave ; quick to his side,

Of massy gold the Temple's store,
As plunder, on his head he bore.

Belshazzar a beaker of foaming wine
Brim to the health of the holy shrine,

And quick, to the uttermost dregs, he quaffs,
And blows the foam from his lips, and laughs :

"Jehovah ! forever I give thee scorn ;
I am the King of Babylon."

Ere scarce the word of sin outrang,
His conscience dealt a mortal pang,

And dumb at once were jest and jeer,
And the hall was hushed with a nameless fear.

And see ! and see ! there, on the wall,
A hand comes forth, in view of all,

And writes, and writes, in letters of light,
A scroll of blood—then fades from sight.

Stiff as a stone, all pale as death,
Sat the shuddering king, nor once drew breath,

While horror held the throng spell-bound,
Without a movement or a sound.

The magi came, but none might tell
The meaning of that all saw so well,

But ere ever the dusk saw dawn again,
Belshazzar, by his slaves, lay slain.

SONNETS.

A PROPHECY.

The pioneers of poetry pass on,
 And who hath seen the rising younger race ?
 And who is here to take their honored place,
 And lead the world, when these great men are gone ?
 Yes, they are going, leaving us forlorn ;
 The few survivors walk with slackened pace,
 And one by one we lose each well-loved face
 Still striving on.—But when shall these be born ?
 Ah ! who hath seen the bud above the thorn ?
 Yet all may see the spreading of the rose.
 And who hath seen the Spring on New Year's morn ?
 Yet all may see old winter's covering snows.
 Know this ! already birds are on the wing,
 And, ere you think, 'twill be the singing spring !

1882.

HERMENEUTICAL.

Ask of the poet meaning of his poem ?
 Ask of her wanderings the breathless breeze !
 Ask of the shipwreck hoarse, exhausted seas !
 Ask of the sun his beams, and think to know him !
 The poet's meaning—'twere a poet could show him !
 Might light from space and time, 'gainst fate's decrees,
 Bring sun back speech of these twin mysteries,
 And love, and life creative,—ye might know him.
 Ask of the lily floating on the stream
 Its whiteness whence and whither ! Ask the child
 The origin and meaning of its dream
 Of dear delight whereon no sin has smiled !
 More than your most emotions poets feel,
 Than their most speech their poems to them reveal.

1883.

YOUNG MANHOOD.

I.

When first o'er childhood's twilight tract of sky
 The living rays of morning took their way,
 And life was lit by hope's new-springing day,
 A poet pleased, and sometime sage was I.
 These visions now have vanished, and gone by
 The pride of youth ; time takes me from my play,
 Points the true path whence far am I astray,
 And bids me work,—and live before I die !
 Now error's darkness lifted from mine eye,
 I see the vast circumference of thought,
 The fields of promise that unfurrowed lie,
 The world of works yet waiting to be wrought ;
 The depths and shadows of the mind of man
 I see, and, seeing, will do what I can.

1882.

II.

Now am I humble, and right weak at heart,
 Now bow I down before the world unseen,
 And burn to be as aye earth's best have been,
 Strike to the front and take a foeman's part,
 Fight for the true, the real, and from the start
 Follow my spirit, till the life between
 The lives before and after may be seen
 Full of performance as of love Thou art.
 Now by my weakness am I strong again,
 On ever craving want is based my will
 And I must toil the hungry mouths to fill,
 Must do my duty as my brother men.
 Then up, and on, and ever to the fore,
 For death finds fields for work when life's no more.

1882.

ENTRANCE ON LIFE.

The far off future! what a world is there
 For faith to put her courage to the proof;
 For will to work in, till he raise a roof
 To touch the skies; for hope to fill the air
 With draperies of dreams; or dumb despair
 To shake her bony finger, and the hoof
 Of trampling passion scatter all aloof,
 Till peace and gladness are gone out, with prayer.
 Which shall it be?—ours is the right of choice—
 The world's loud trumpet, or the still, small voice?
 The warm, strong welcome to the heart at home,
 Or the applause that shakes a senate's dome?
 Which shall it be? Will makes or mars a life!—
 Ah! God, who knows the issue of that strife?

LIFE'S DAY.

As is the day-spring so should be our birth,
 A sign of glory, and a sight to cheer,
 Of hope and faith and love the harbinger,
 A star of promise dawning o'er the earth.
 But as the noontide should shine forth our worth,
 So pure that never stain may lie therein,
 So clear 'twould sully with the slightest sin,
 So true it grasps the globe within its girth.
 Gentle and helpful all our life should be,
 A solace and a strength to friends around,
 That what time death sits by our couch shall be
 With happy heart and smiling face be found,
 And rapt in peace serene may pass away
 In awful beauty like the dying day.

Jan'y. 1882.

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.

Ah! when within the soul the passions swell,
 And thoughts gigantic through their vapor rise
 With finger lifted to the beckoning skies,
 On wings upgathered where the secrets dwell
 Of the eternal silence, till they tell
 The living words of truth that time defies,
 Lift off the temple's veil to mortal eyes,
 Lay bare the heavens and their empty hell.
 Ah! when the head and heart are big with thought
 And feeling from the ends of being brought,
 When o'er the hollow of the sunless soul
 The infinite voices of the Godhead roll,
 The starry censers swing and shed their light,
 Then, God, 'tis day with me, though it be night.

Jan'y, 1882.

EVENING.

The sun hath gone his solitary way,
 And shut the gate of gold within the west,
 And eve hath come, with weariness and rest,
 To sit beside our bed and hear us pray,
 And mend the broken labors of the day,
 And croon the songs her childhood loved the best,
 And fold us in her arms and to her breast
 Most motherly, as only mothers may.
 She whispers, smiling, in our sleepy ear,
 Sweet calm and comfort, and the words of cheer,
 And sheds the peace of her pure presence near;
 And when we wake she's gone, but still the spell
 Is on us, still her dreams within us dwell,
 And still we hear her whisper: It is well.

1882.

BODY AND SOUL.

Ah ! body, body, what a thief thou art
 To steal away the thoughts I love the best,
 And stifle down my soul with thine unrest,
 And lock thy brooding troubles in my heart !
 Why wilt thou wake me with this sudden start
 From my dear dreaming, till, by ills oppressed,
 I wander homeless, outcast, dispossessed,
 And see my thoughts, all shelterless, depart !
 Ah ! body, body, 'tis a sin in thee
 To persecute me so ! yet 'twill not be
 Forever, or for long ; full well I know
 Thy realm doth end ; soon 'twill be time to go
 Where I shall live and grow forever free,
 In thoughts and joys I can not know with thee.

1883.

DOUBT AND FAITH.

I know not who I am ? nor where ? nor why ?
 Nor whence I came to seek this special sphere ?
 Nor whither I shall go on leaving here ?
 Nor if by death I live ? by birth I die ?
 Nor, hid from sense, what worlds without me lie ?
 What whisperings within, no ear can hear ?
 Nor God ? nor man ? nor matter—though so near ?
 Nor earth ? nor hell ? nor heaven ? no, not I !
 'Tis darkness all around, and dreams, and doubt !
 But doubt destroys ; I live and long to be,
 And doubt can not deny this boon to me.
 Then doubt is dead, and faith at last found out,
 For this dead doubt is faith's foundation stone,
 And faith I cling to, fearless, though alone.

1883.

REASON AND FAITH.

To be, not knowing what we were before !
 To walk a little way in darkness here,
 Then die, and where we go have no idea !
 And this is life, the wisest know no more.
 Ah ! do they not ? when thoughts' brief flight is o'er
 Then faith can cleave away the clouds of fear,
 Hope show the smiling heavens calm and clear,
 Love lift life's shadows off death's sunny shore.
 It is not intellect avails the most
 But faith whereon the wisest ever stand,—
 Who fling not through the infinite their boast
 But rest within the hollow of His hand,
 And find a hand of life so more than this
 Earth's grief turns gladness, and her suffering bliss.

1883.

LIFE AND DEATH.

All life is not to live, all death to die ;
 To do, all doing ; but to—being—be !
 'Tis sympathy completes sincerity,
 A smiling earth demands a shining sky.
 Of nerve and mind bereft, what were the eye ?
 Of sense and brain, what would the body be ?
 In faith, hope, charity, God's greatest three,
 Life lives forever, death doth never die.
 Each soul is centre of a world whence flows
 Incessant influence,—alas ! who knows,
 Life-giving or death-dealing ?—but repose
 Never ! forever either weal or woes !
 'Tis life by love on earth in heaven to dwell ;
 'Tis death by hate in heaven to feel it hell !

1883.

DEATH IN LIFE.

Mother of mortals, many-burdened earth,
 More are thy mourners than thy trees and leaves,
 Thy lover death too subtle snares enweaves,
 Life of thy life, breath of thy breath, from birth.
 He sees thy beauty, feels thy passing worth,
 Thee fairer than thy children finds, believes
 Thy faithfulness, though every element grieves,
 And of thy passioned sorrow makes his mirth.
 More are thy mourners than thy trees and leaves!
 Nor beetle burrows, bee builds cell so fast,
 Nor sure blind mole the ground so swiftly heaves,
 But sexton death doth bury them, at last.
 Men see not half the graves the antic delves;
 Most mourn for others, who for their dead selves?

1883.

LOVE.

Love, do I dream, or art thou come to me?
 Do I dream, love? thy face I seem to see,
 And form familiar through its mystery.
 Out of the clouds thy coming from afar
 Shone on my soul in calm and glad content,
 Brought order out of my bewilderment,
 As evening's mild and early rising star
 Throws on the earth dim gleams of things afar,
 Illumines life's wide-clouded continent,—
 With little shows the more of meaning meant
 That makes and shapes and holds us what we are.
 So in the twilight here, slow on my sight,
 God's blessings grow in beauty, and the night
 With love's star-fires shines serenely bright.

Dec., 1882.

VIA RECTA—THE "STRAIT" WAY. .

"Eurydice ! Eurydice !" Of old
 The tale of Orpheus, ringing in mine ears,
 Would woo to wonder, till the idle tears
 Thrud down the cheek, for one who could enfold,
 With spell of song, even bleak death a-cold.
 Hence, happiness, through life's slow-swimming
 years,
 Deep laden with their dusky freight of fears,
 Love-wrought, love-lost, is in his like controlled.
 He who could beat the breezes into tune,
 The silent stones wake from the sleepy sod,
 Trees move, beasts soothe, with Panic pipe and rod
 Of wreathèd rhythm, nature's cradling rune ;
 He who with happiness, hope, health, did dwell,
 Lost all by love's one backward glance to Hell !

May 20, 1883.

"EHEU ! FUGACES."

"GOD IS LIGHT AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL."
 Poor, phantom pleasure, would we praise thee so
 Had we not known thee in our time of youth,
 When trusting childhood takes the world in truth
 All virgin-white—nor sin nor sorrow throw
 Their thin and thicker films of want and woe
 Across our sight? nor care's corroding tooth
 Hath fleshed its fang ; nor conscience set the sleuth
 To track our loves and hopes of long ago?
 Wherefore these joys—ay, why?—which we must know
 To love and live for, yet to lose them so?
 Ah ! why the stars that, shining, rift the night,
 If not to show this world shall yet be light,—
 Now passing through its first creative throes,—
 When God, well-pleased, shall pause—command it so.

May 20, 1883.

"YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD."

"The world?" what world? why bow and bend the knee
To things so feeble and so fickle be,—

Opinion, fashion, and society?

Build from within, and straight the level lay
And square of conscience; be the master plan
Thy duty's aim; thy strength the measured span;

Thy will the force; thy love, God-given day
To glorify the work; thy faith to pray,

Thy hope and peace to hallow unto man
Temple of holies! Earth nor Heaven can

No nobler than this mould of common clay.

Ye who for life and liberty have fought,
Freedom, fraternity, whose only thought,
Strike slavery off—and live as Christ hath taught!

May 20, 1883.

THE HARVEST CALL.

"THE HARVEST TRULY IS PLENTEOUS, BUT THE
LABORERS ARE FEW."

Who hath not thought, when walking on the street

Among the jostling throng of passers by,

And gathering up the faces with his eye

In quick and curious glances, as they meet

To vanish with the tread of trampling feet,

And meet no more—what frequent secrets lie

These smiles beneath? What anguished spirits cry,

In mortal torture, that so gaily greet?

Who hath not dropped the features from a face,

And seen the shrinking soul start back within,

Flushed with the hot and sudden shame of sin?

Or felt how innocence can gift and grace?

And who, with heart and hand, that will not go

Help heal such sickness, suffering, and woe?

1883.

. THE HOUSE OF GOD.

"KNOW YE NOT THAT YE ARE A TEMPLE OF GOD?"

There is a temple, one not made with hand,
 Whose clustered columns and wide arches rise
 With free symmetric sweep beyond the skies,
 Whose crowning dome no mortal measure spanned ;
 A building godly wrought, divinely planned,
 Where men may worship free from curious eyes,
 The multitude find solitude they prize,
 In this vast structure doth so stately stand.
 A holy hush is here, and all the air
 Is laden with the silent voice of prayer ;
 And half-heard music down the distance flees,
 The hand of God on life's wide organ-keys,
 While hidden choirs sing as angels can
 To ease the suffering, soothe the soul, of man.

1883.

A HERMITAGE.

A hermitage is in each soul of man,
 Where he may dwell apart, and always be
 On holy ground ; wherein his heart and he
 May worship, as a chastened sorrow can,
 The love, the wisdom of God's perfect plan ;
 May, as before a shrine, their bosoms free
 From vain complaint and restless mutiny,
 And by their faith death's silent current span.
 The altar of our memories is there,
 Our dead are clustered round the living flame,
 Their faces sanctify the sacred air,
 The silence breathes with whispering lips their name!
 And though the world's wide trouble round us roar,
 Within is peace and joy forevermore.

April, 1882.

SERVICE.

Best gift of earth, no nobler name than thine
 Is written in the world, no grander face
 Is pictured on its pages than thy grace
 Of humble presence, lowliness divine
 Where through the human heaven's glories shine.
 No other form could please us in thy place,
 No mother strengthen so our fretful race
 As thou, whose milk is love's immortal wine.
 Free sacrifice of self, thou art above
 The tongues of envy, evil's fell disease ;
 The centre and the living core of love,
 The faith all feel, the substance no one sees :
 And hearts, however poor, have given thee rest,
 Can ne'er forget a God has been their guest.

1882.

WORSHIP.

O, who hath seen the beauty of the night
 Nor felt the face of God upon his own,
 Wherein such wondrous love and wisdom shone
 His soul in worship swept to Heaven's height ?
 And who hath fed his thoughts upon the sight
 In reverence and rapture till at last
 He from the furnace fire of doubt has passed
 Whole by the touch of truth, and seen aright ?
 Then where is he that hath not heart to raise
 High unto heaven prayer and psalms of praise,
 Whose monarch all this myriad scene obeys ?
 Who hath not won thereby a faith to brave
 The scoffs of Satan for our God who gave
 Life to this death, glory beyond the grave ?

1883.

OLD FRIENDS.

'Twas not so long, no ! not so long ago,—
 And yet the years seem centuries to me !—
 I learned to lose a loved one, learned to see
 The inner joy of sorrow, learned to know
 The life within my life whence comforts flow
 To clear the mists from grief's too troubled sea,
 Bring heaven back and childhood home to me,
 And lift the darkness and its weight of woe.
 Now sorrow is my friend, my self, to whom
 I turn for strength, on whom in peace I rest ;
 In whose wide heart my griefs find ample room,
 Who knows the touches wounds like mine love best.
 'Twould be my greatest grief should sorrow go,
 We've lived and loved so long—and suffered so !

1882.

FORGETFULNESS.

I saw a mother hush her sobbing child,
 And win it back unto its wonted rest
 With kisses and soft blisses of the breast
 Till, through its wondering tears, the infant smiled.
 And when I saw its baby grief beguiled,
 And life again so bounteous and blest,
 So full of careless joy and eager zest,
 I hungered for forgetfulness—a child!
 Alas! a child am I with more of woe
 Than with these youthful years is wont to go.
 And I must live and labor on alone,
 No mother nigh to make my griefs her own,
 And I must watch and wait, remembering still,
 And suffer silent though my sorrow kill.

1882.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SORROW.

How true, how strange, the fellowship of sorrow ;
 Of sorrow whom we fear not to offend ;
 This living feeling of a present friend,
 Same yesterday, to-day, again to-morrow.
 Our own revealing, confidential sorrow,
 Will promise to be with us to the end,
 From whom we—enmity ? No, God forefend !—
 But sympathy and understanding borrow.
 A sad face hers, I grant, and yet how striking !
 Acquainted with the sisterhood of years ;
 A sternest friend, yet staunch, and gains in liking,
 Holds calm our hopes, and folds away our fears.
 In joy from grief I smile my sorrow free ;
 In grief my sorrow smiles back peace to me.

1882.

THE GIFT OF GRIEF.

Suffer I must, yet sympathize I may,
 But who is here in sympathy with me—
 The feelings feels, fears sees, I feel and see—
 Will tread the road and smoothen first the way ?
 Ah ! none, yet true it is the Scriptures say :
 God's deserts oft hold prophet company !
 To hearten and console are spirits free,
 Be patience, cheerfulness, my mates to-day.
 To suffer, yet to sympathize, I say :
 To quaff the bitter, bear the blessed cup,
 Refresh the faint, and lift the fallen up,
 Support the weary, and reclaim the stray.
 What joy to feel e'en suffering may make
 Accepted present for her great love's sake !

1882.

CONSOLATION.

From heart, full heart, to feeling heart, I sing,
 No mimic woes are mine, no empty show,
 They all have taken root and still they grow
 And burgeon into fruitful blossoming.
 I sing to ease my pain and suffering,
 In sympathy with all who bear the blow
 Of heavy sorrow, yet lack faith to know
 The crown of thorns was worn by Christ, the King !
 I bid ye feel that one hath known your woe,
 That one hath sounded to the depths your grief,
 Hath passed through death, hath brought ye back
 relief,
 And seen athwart the storm the bended bow.
 Cheer ye who mourn, and comfort ye who weep !
 The mists are clearing, God is on the deep.

Oct., 1882.

NEW YEARS.

You sigh, and ask me why am I so sad ?
 And how can grief lie heavy on the heart
 'Of my young years ? and shake your curls apart,
 And laugh, and look so penitently glad, —
 You would, but can not, share the griefs I've had.
 No ! God be praised, hath given me the start
 To thrust among these troubles, and to part
 An easy way for thee, so lightly clad.
 Yet I would show thee sorrow, yea ! the whole,
 In thought would take thee by the path I trod,
 For grief gives strength and sweetness to the soul,
 And lifts a life within the love of God. —
 What will the winter be, if such the spring ?
 That winter was ! New years new blessings bring.

Oct., 1882.

DEATH.

One side of life we see, of death one side ;
 What wisdom more their outer faces teach
 We know not yet ; no plummet line can reach
 To these twin mysteries,—the whirling tide
 Of worldly passion sweeps the lead aside.
 Yet silence sometimes takes the voice of speech,
 The stillness of this world-wide stir, to preach
 The fearful downfall of the body's pride.
 But we, our foot upon the turning earth,
 See not, so careless is our thoughtless mirth,
 The body of what death hath given us birth ;
 Heed not the spirit's call, but blindly roam
 Till death shows face to face the lowly dome,
 Nor hear the music of God's harvest-home.

April, 1882.

'Tis life is dead ! death lives forevermore ;
 But we who mourn are dying day by day,
 And soon shall take their place who pass away,
 And stand alone upon that soundless shore,
 The trackless waste behind, the mist before,
 And, groping blindly through the gloaming grey,
 Return to Thee in loneliness and pray
 To lead us on, as they were led of yore.
 A more abundant life our spirits crave,
 Where death is not, but o'er the roomy grave
 The wings of angels on the sleeper wave,
 And bid him rise and lead him to the light,
 And bid him gaze, and grow upon the sight,
 And live within the land that knows no night.

April, 1882.

"No More Tears."

In every heart a hidden sorrow lies,
 And men by bonds of brotherhood are kin
 Who feel this sacred guest enshrined within,
 Who watch from earth this spirit-form arise
 Till heaven opens on their tearless eyes.
 The one life sorrow, whence their lives begin,
 And widen on, and deeper channels win,
 The peace of soul that fears no change of skies,
 And we are one in sorrow, one beside
 In joy of spirit since our dead have died ;
 For we, who feel them living with us here,
 Know them not dead, but never yet so near,
 And well may sing the simple song of seven
 Whose friends live still on earth as in the heaven.

April, 1882.

Dead ! dead ! they say, our dearest friend is dead !
 But we, the few, have nobler faith than this ;
 We feel—though, too, his nearness here we miss,—
 It is not he, but we in him are dead.
 He lives and leads us as in life he led :
 Lives in our hopes, our thoughts, our acts, and this
 Is noble living—death's preserving kiss—
 To live in all for all, in soul instead.
 Ah ! none so near as they we may not see,
 And none so dear as they whose faces flee,
 But leave their lives and loves for us to live,
 Their strength of purpose, their example give,
 Till thus ennobled, lifted, we are fit
 To see their heaven—and to enter it.

1882.

Those dear old friends, we walk among them still.

Is it not hard to think of them as dead ?

Do we not seek them oft, to find them fled

With a new shock of sorrow, as we fill

Old memories with life and form until

They die again within us, and the head

Hangs heavy, and strange tears we thought were sped
Course down our cheeks unheeded, as they will ?

An after-season sorrow follows on

When earth has lost its hold, and all our gaze

Is on the unseen, when the secret ways

Of life and death blend broadly into one,

And we are met again, the whole can see,

And now may mourn no more, so wise are we.

1882.

Dumb, changeless death! what mould of man is he

Can look this fearful future in the face

Nor fall, nor falter in life's forward race,

Nor strain his sight, though vain, some goal to see ?

Hath he no fears, no hopes, no loves, as we ?

Hath he no need of help, or outward grace,

To hold him firm, not slipping from his place ?

Is he then master of his misery ?

If death be all, then life is nothing too,

And pleasure that hath end — earth's best success ;

None live for present joy, all men confess

It is the future Life is looking to.

No faith on earth, no hope in heaven to dwell,

At once were death, and nothingness, and hell !

Oct., 1882.

FRIENDSHIP.

I.

And what is friendship? Is it worship? No!
 Or weak indulgence? Love, that, being blind,
 Within a friend no fault can ever find?
 Indifference? Thin tolerance, below
 Whose grinning skin the falser features show?
 Mere property? or pleasure? or a kind
 Of joint-stock firm for profit? ah! not so!
 Is it a fashion which we think to wear
 A summer season, till it prove threadbare?
 Or an infirmity, to weaken men,
 More fit for women and their feebler ken?
 What soul could live, in such a world of woe,
 Should friendship, life's best friend, turn bitterest
 foe?

1882.

II.

And what is friendship? Is it worship? Yes!
 The worship of the noblest and the best,
 The love that brings the spirit peace and rest,
 The strong support when thickening troubles press
 Around the struggling life; love none the less
 That can rebuke a wrong, but sin confessed
 Enfold with gentle pity to its breast,
 And like a mother soothe, a father bless.
 To hold a high ideal before a friend,
 To cheer his faltering courage to the end,
 And earnest counsel with correction blend;
 And yet with such a sympathetic sense,
 And warmth of love, and interest intense,
 The spirit speaks, and none can take offense.

1882.

III.

The hottest friendships are most quick to freeze,
 For such expansive feelings cannot last,
 When once scorn's icy chill has overpassed
 Away they go to warm the winter breeze ;
 Their heat makes little show and no one sees,
 But, by the bitter breathing of the blast,
 They lie there stiff, and frozen hard and fast,
 And people laugh at follies such as these.
 And we have laughed, and been laughed at, in turn,
 To see our former youthful fancies burn
 Thus dry as dust, like ashes in an urn ;
 But better feelings live this dust above :
 Who scorns the service of a worn out glove ?
 Who lives the poorer for his lavished love ?

1882.

IV.

Fairweather feelings, lukewarm loves, are not
 The food of friendship ; nor the transient glow
 Of fiery passion whose illusive show
 Destroys, and makes the better self forgot ;
 Nor free familiarity to trot,
 With little ceremony, to and fro,—
 In careless incivility to go ;
 Such speckled friendships fly-blow and dry-rot.
 A coat without a lining may do well
 In summer weather, but a winter storm
 Needs double-breasted substance to keep warm,
 Strong shags whose looks their useful virtues tell ;
 And you'll oft find the warmest friendships those
 That walk about in roughest sorts of clothes.

1882.

TO A FRIEND OF COLLEGE DAYS.

Who wins a friend should wear him next his heart,
 In each day's uses prove his nobler part
 With love, till friendship feel : as I, thou art.

Dear friend, so we have been to one another
 In sympathy of soul, accordant mind,
 Heart-fellowship ; whichever way inclined
 Still trusting all to each, as son to mother ;
 Supporting manfully, as brother brother ;
 Correcting fatherly, wise, mild, and kind ;
 Uplifting sisterly,—love, pride, combined ;
 A family in friendship to each other.

And as through life time flies on tireless wing
 May coming seasons equal harvests bring,
 Rich, ripened fruits of friendships blossoming.

Dec., 1882.

TO G. A. B.

When gray Ulysses, way-worn, trod the sea
 With wanderings wind-like on from shore to shore,
 In Ithaca sought wife and child once more,
 And bliss connubial as erst wont to be;
 Calypsos' isle where lotos slumbers free,
 Lethæan Circe's cup of mandragore,
 The sirens chanting to the ocean roar,
 And Polypheme, through weary years saw he.
 Forgetfulness slept, seeming, in the sense,
 Yet memory sang steadfast in his soul
 Of love and hope and home—past penance whole—
 Uprisen to their ancient eminence.
 So twice I tender, friend, my friendship now,
 As he Penelope betrothal vow.

May 18, 1883.

TO E. L. M.

I.

Dear sister, closest knit by bonds unseen,
 I would not try decipher by my art
 Love's hieroglyph fire-written in thy heart ;
 I would not rend of memory the screen,
 Though thin the veil our kindred souls between ;
 I would not touch thy grief, so quick to start ;
 But I would share with thee, would bear a part
 In sympathy, as one who, too, has seen.
 One who has felt the sharpest fangs of strife,
 Of loss and sorrow, fasten on his life ;
 Bade hope and joy goodbye, and made a friend
 Of grief, and yet looked forward to the end
 With ease and equanimity of mind,
 Whichever way God will, alike resigned.

II.

There is small comfort here, I fear, for thee,
 Would there were more ! would thou, as I, couldst see
 How Divine-human griefs' infirmity.
 Yet thou hast felt—I feel it—in thy soul
 This dawning life, this broadening light, of love,
 The tendency of thought to soar above
 Earth's shadowy part to sunshine of the whole !
 Thou too—I feel it—strengthened toward the goal
 Faith's step, learned thoughtfulness, more liberal love,
 A juster judgment ; seen the white-winged dove
 Brood peace o'er thine embosomed billows roll.
 Fill high life's golden bowl with strongest stress
 Of sun-touched wine ! when screws of sorrow press
 Love's richer, freer : *God wills grief to bless !*

III.

I know thy mind more than I know my tongue,
 For thought is old but speech forever young,
 Yet they that stammer worst their words have sung.

I know that there are shadows on the shore
 Of thy life ocean ; that the misty sea
 Loves solitude and silence, and must be

Often alone, none listening to the roar
 Of its tossed surges—yet, grown calm once more,
 Hath need in lonelines of sympathy
 Till sea and sky in one eternity

Encircling meet, now fairer than before.
 So, sister of my soul, I pray for thee :
 Joint earth and heaven thy horizon be !
 God's presence still thy life's too stormy sea.

1882.

TO V. C. W.

I.

SWEET WERE THE HOURS.

Hail, leafy June ! Spring-Summer month, all hail !
 Glad tidings thine of fruits the flowers shall bring.
 Soft winds, and warmth, and cooling showering,
 Woo through thy honeymoon ; the gentle gale
 Stirs all the speechless singers of the vale,
 Broadcasts the breathing spicery of spring,
 Wafting her fragrance with uplifting wing
 From hill and meadow, flowers red and pale.
 Thine prime and beauty, youth and strength, of love,
 Rich song of past, and promise fair to come ;
 Large present life, from insect-laden hum
 Of worlds beneath to chime of spheres above.
 In all thy gladness never from her flee !
 Blest marriage month—what June this June shall be !

May 20, 1883.

II.

FIRSTLINGS OF SPRING.

Sweet breathing flowers, lend thy cheer awhile,
 Thy charm for men, thy peace-imparting smile,
 Thy maiden presence thought may not defile.

I have a secret, shall I tell it thee ?

Thou'dst tell the breezes, and the knaves would bring
 The news through all the world with scattering wing,

And then, alas ! where would my secret be ?

The land would know it, and the listening sea
 The laughing sky would whisper, everything
 Be big with wonder at the tale I bring;

A wedding's on !—my sister's !—yes, 'tis she.
 In June, the flower month ! and thee I call :
 Give beauty, bounty, blessing, great and small,
 In whitest wishes dress her—one of all.

May 20, 1883.

III.

SONGS UNSUNG.

Hark ! hark ! from farthest future swiftly stealing,

I hear a sound, so strangely low and sweet,

A chime where many memories seem to meet;—

A marriage carillon the bells are pealing.

'Tis now of joy—and see the towers reeling

Glad tidings o'er the fields in frolic fleet!

'Tis now of grief—the milder measures beat

A mingled theme of prophecy and feeling:

Life's early dream; youth's vague, unfolding grace;

The light of maidenhood; the flushing face

And tender tears that love and losing trace;

The mother's holy calm; time's dark revealing;

The last home-bringing to the resting place;—

Through life, through death—ah ! hark ! how strangely
 stealing.

May 20, 1883.

TO M. F. W.

The gentle custom holds on Christmas day
 To give sweet greeting to each absent friend,
 But I could find no fitting gift to send,
 No friendly word which I should care to say :
 For gifts wherein no wealth of meaning lay,
 And words wherein no memories could blend
 Their distant music, where no thought were penned,
 Or speaking joy,—seemed cold and far away.
 So I have come myself to visit thee,
 To claim a moment from thy busy cheer
 And ask thee, truly, to accept of me
 A Merry Christmas and a Happy Year :—
Thy wishes, on this brightest, best of days,
 To wish thee now, and wish thee then,—*always*.

Dec., 1882.

TO E. L. M.

The world holds Christmas in the world's old way,
 A time of general joy, and childlike glee,
 And shining faces round the Christmas tree,
 As earth's heart opens to her children's play.
 But you and I discern another day,
 A solemn, holy season, when we see,
 With sorrow's secret sense of sympathy,
 Friend's faces faring far from earth away.
 And we give greeting, too, as best we may,
 With thoughts and faiths and hopes and loves most
 dear,
 And swift-winged memories which no space can stay,
 And soon returning messages appear.
 Thus eager love leaves life beside the way
 And Christmas is the Spirits' gifting day.

Dec., 1882.

“WAES HÆL.”

I met the old year whispering the new,
 'Twas strange to see it! and like twins the two,—
 Both “babe” and “grey-beard,”—real as I or you.
 Fresh, firm, the young year stood, in manhood's
 prime,

Tough-thewed, steel-sinewed, full of rest, as one
 Who feels he hath a race for life to run

And saves himself against the trial time.

The old, full-breathed, deep-chested; his to climb
 The century-crowned hills whose vales the sun
 O'ershadows when his task each day is done,

Heaven's matin-bells to hear, and vesper chime.
 And as they turned to part, a fiery flame
 Ran through me, I forgot my fear and shame,
 Crept close and murmured in each ear *thy name*.

Dec. 29, 1882.

THE OLD NEW YEAR.

Thy face, old friend, is newer than thy heart,
 I know thee through this mocking masquerade,
 And claim acquaintance by no doubt dismayed,
 'Twas false, I felt, that thou and I could part.
 Nay, nay! step not aside! stare not! nor start
 Away in sudden anger!—art afraid
 Of me whom joy and sorrow with thee made
 One man? Come close again! ah, here thou art!
 Say, was this kindly, friend, to pass me by
 And show no sign of having met before?
 We who have known and felt together more
 Than earth takes wot of with her purblind eye?
 Be strange to *them*! mask! cloak thyself in cheer!
 But / have known thee long, thou old, old year.

Dec. 29, 1882.

RESOLUTIONS.

'Tis the new year—and the new life beside.
 For as we scan the features of our prime,
 Confined within this narrow vale of time,
 Encamped upon the turn of this still tide,
 Shame and repentance pale our cheek of pride ;
 The halo of our childhood hopes appears
 In rainbow radiance, mingled smiles and tears.
 What mystery is man, this spirit wide,
 Who from his sense of failure yet may see
 His depths of power, heights of purity !
 Wed this, the time of promise, as thy bride,
 Make solemn purpose sure fulfillment shine ;—
 To will is noble, but to do divine !—
 Then shall the New Year bring new life beside.

Jan'y, 1882.

FALSE SONNETS.

I.

THROES.

I wish to write—I don't know why—
 But, though I've searched the wide world round,
 No fertile subject can be found,
 The soil is so profoundly dry.
 'Tis pity, when I wish to fly,
 To run my nose so in the ground,
 Just where such gifts do not abound.
 But I will do it—though I die!
 Come, Muse, great goodness! what'll I say?
 No fooling now, 'tis no child's play,
 Come! anything—'most, anyway!
 Oh, no! no hurry, pray, my friend,
 I've lots of wit and time to spend;
 Come! come! Come what? Why, come—the end.

1882.

II.

LABOR.

Wha's done his stint o' toil to-day
 An' has na' warmin' a' his heart,
 A joy to suage each sorrow's smart,
 A strength to face a' men an' say
 He is as guid a mon as they?

But wha's na borne his honest part
 I' the warl's wark ha lost his start
 An', fause at heart, aye gone astray.
 For wha wad hae his friend a shirk,
 His body rot to save his breath?
 Guid halesome physic is hard work,
 A faithfu' friend unto the death.

Stuff this bit pith i' a' yer noddles sair :
 "Wha alway does his might, will whyles do mair,"

Jan'y, 1882.

SUDDEN DARKNESS.

The day is gone, and yet the night not come,
 The night when man may rest, and all is still,
 But in the vale, and high upon the hill,
 A darkness gathers, and the songs are dumb ;
 Now nature's creatures hush their ceaseless hum,
 And silence falls, and nameless terrors thrill
 The waiting world with vague impending ill,
 And dreams—of sleep to many, death to some!
 Yes, day is gone—life's light and heat are fled!
 And night not come—yet joy and hope are dead !
 Thick darkness fills the vale and clouds the hill,
 The million voices of the soul are still,
 But yet God's heavens are bright, the sun stands high!
 Say, will it clear *below*, and *show* the sky?

1886.

THE ROUND OF LIFE.

I.

Embosomed in the being of the night,
With feeble first-breath in the darkness drawn,
How should I know the nature of the dawn,
How feel the absent influence of light?
To me obscurity seemed purely bright,
I took the world in truth, and travelled on
Unquestioning, in manner I was born,
Strove not nor sought for things beyond my sight.
But on a time, with pulses all astir,
I watched a gleaming vision in the north,
And from the east, where the great waters were,
The blossoms of the budding morn break forth,
And the faint traces of the sunrise bore
Joy, strength, and love, but peace, ah! nevermore.

II.

I quaffed the sparkling sunwine till my heart
With laughter leaped within my bounding breast,
The newness of the scene my soul possest,
I wandered, wondering, in every part;
And if regret yet left a lingering smart
For past content and never questioned rest,
I quick dismissed it with a careless jest,
For, Life, had I not thee, and all thou art?—
The flush of morn, the glory of the noon,
The languor of the heavy-laden flowers?
But ah! a shadow crossed my path, and soon
I felt the quickened breathing of the hours;
My world was gone, and sun and shining stream,
And I alone, in darkness, with my dream.

III.

O birth accurst, and life revealed in vain!
 O passing joy, and sorrow swift apace!
 The golden glory vanished from thy face,
 I see, I know thee for thyself again.
 O house of heaviness, and woe, and pain!
 O gall and wormwood in the honey's place!
 The gleam is gone of evening's last embrace,
 And darkening shadows mingle on the plain.
 But lo! the sky, so beautiful, so bright!
 Canst thou be she I parted from of yore?
 O peace complete! I never knew thee, night,
 I never felt thy tenderness before.
 But now I know—O bliss beyond belief!
 Life's crown of thorns—*joy perfected by grief.*

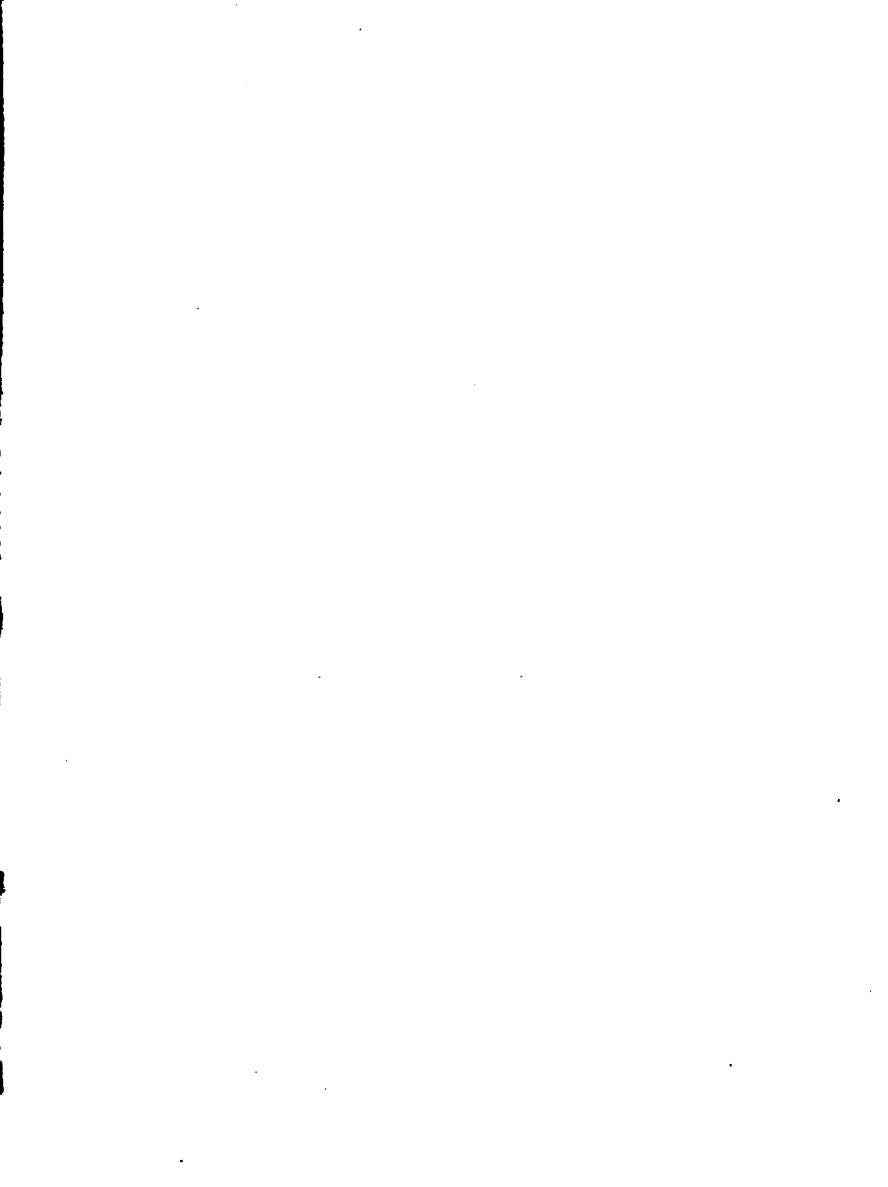
1883.

THE BOOK OF LIFE.

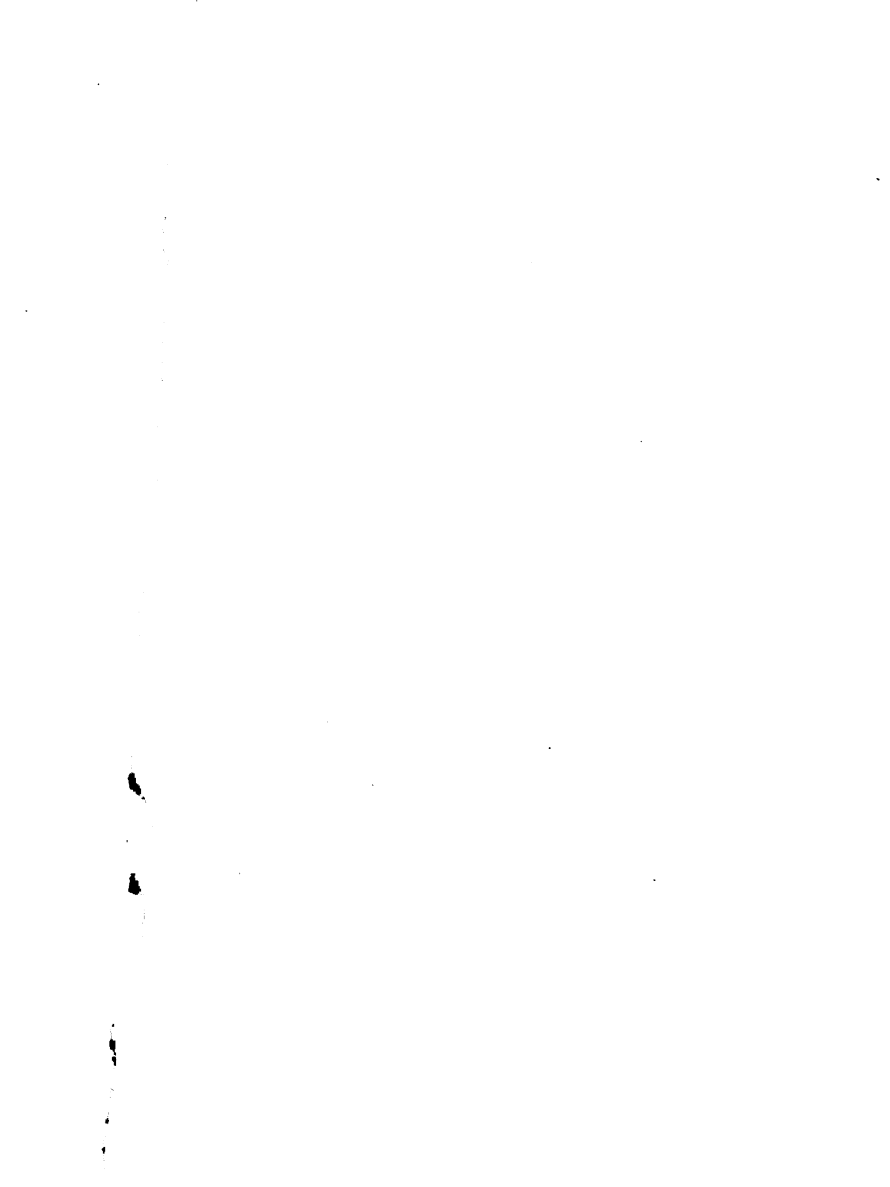
Lay by the pen a breathing-while, and turn
 Thought's fingered page, so dimly yet divined,
 Dog's-eared, and creased, and torn, and interlined,
 And blurred by tears, and writ with words that yearn
 With youth impassioned, and, enleaved, discern,
 'Mid wreathed myrrh and myrtle intertwined,
 Life's few memorial immortelles of mind,
 And love therewith engarlanded eterne.
 Re-read the record of thy joy and grief,
 The favorite passage, the familiar page,
 The sacred meaning of the folded leaf,
 Illumined by the gathered light of age;
 Each later chapter fold fresh flowerets down,
 The colophon a cross be—in a crown!

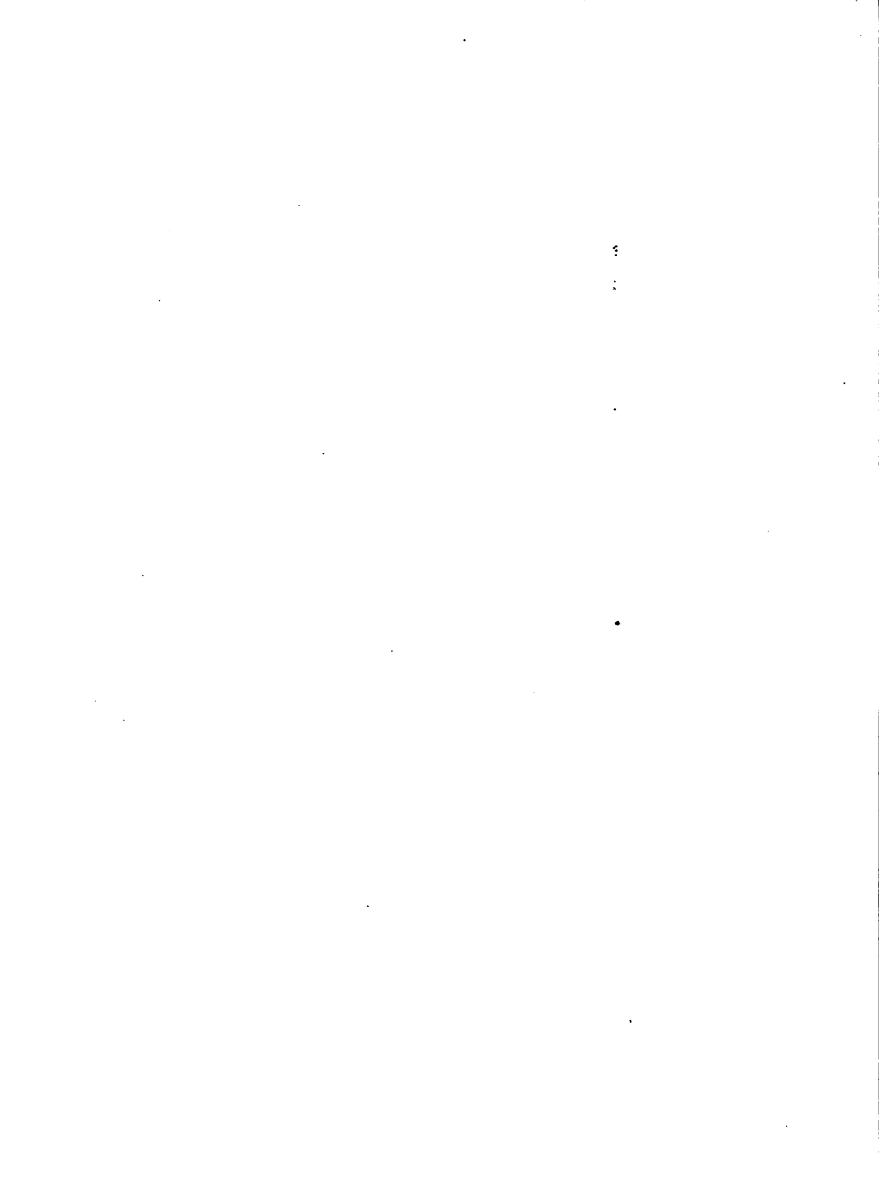
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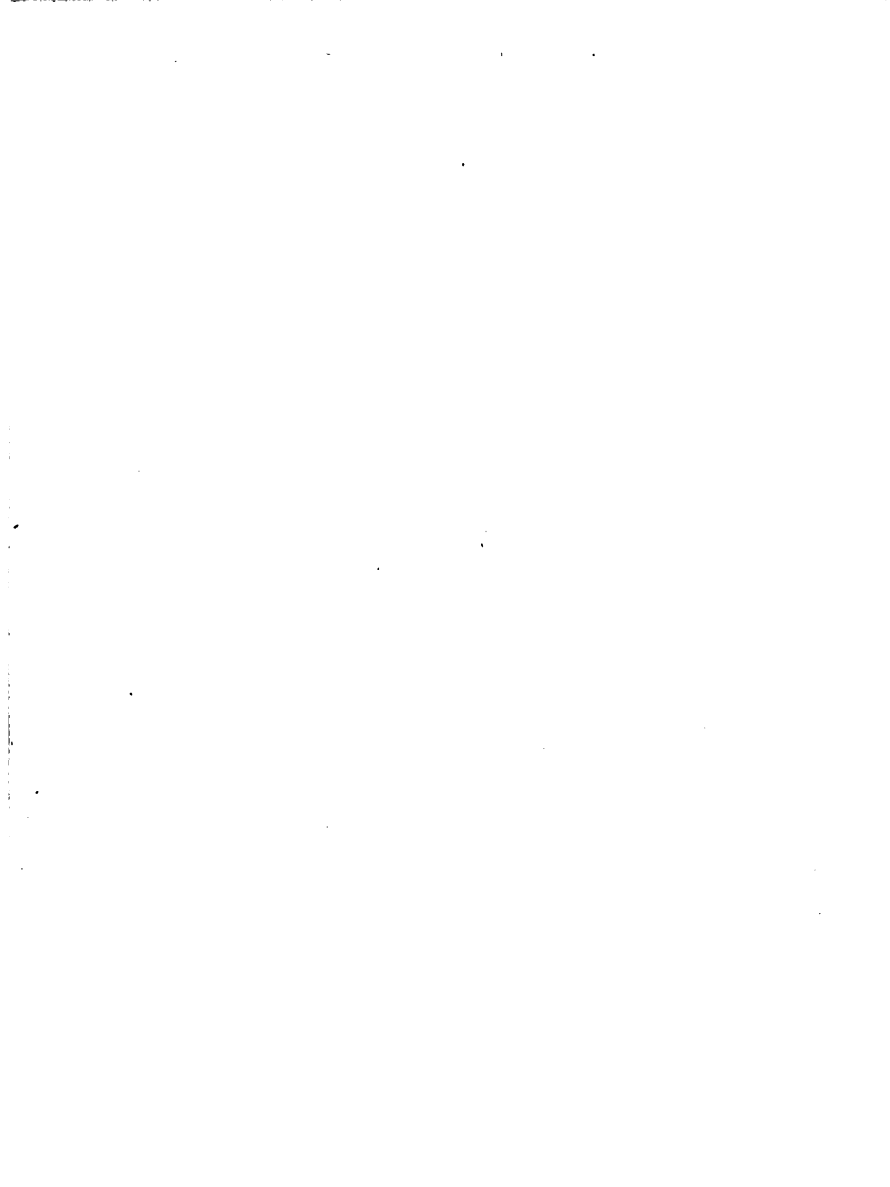
And here will I make an end. And if I have done well, and as is fitting, it is that which I desired : but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could attain unto.—II. MACCABEES 15, 38.















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